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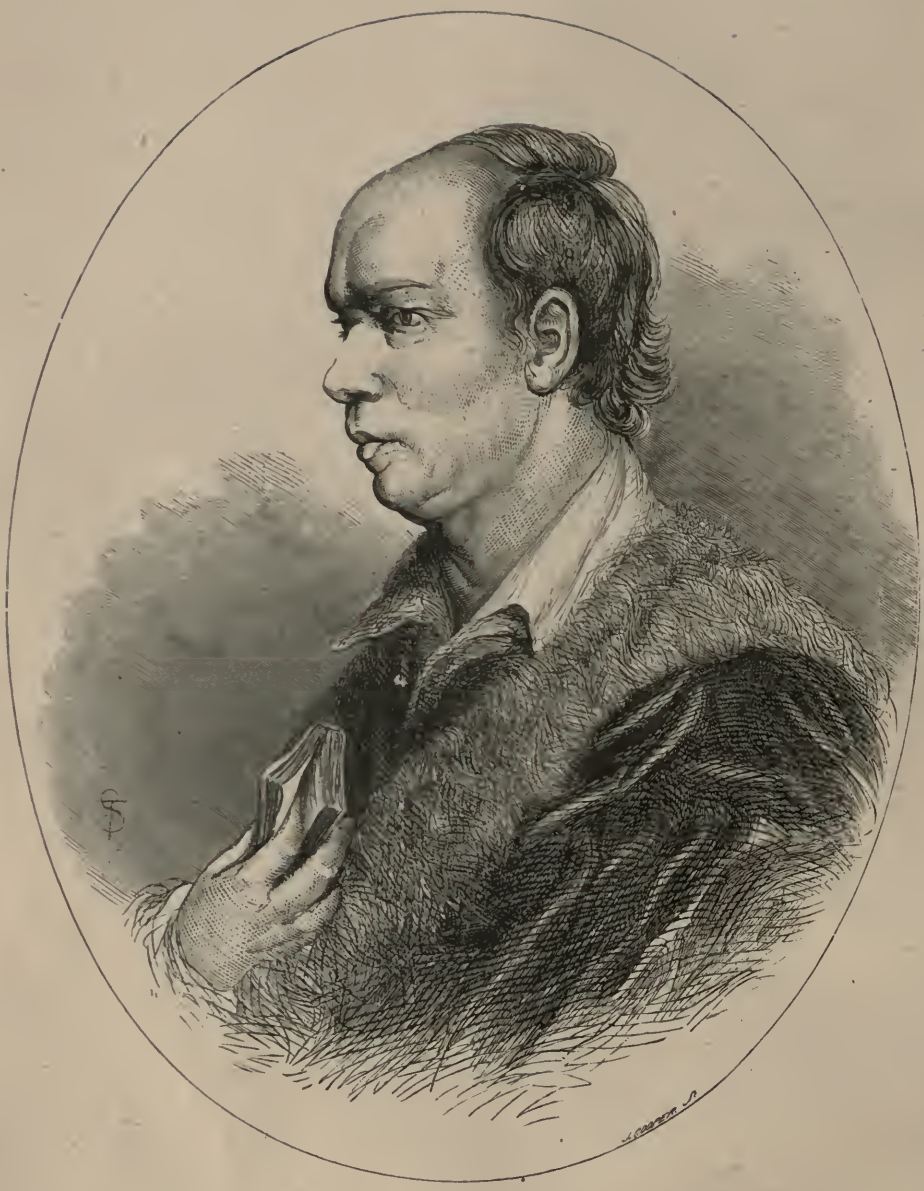

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

THE WORKS

OF

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

ILLUSTRATED.

VICAR OF WAKEFIELD, SELECT POEMS,

AND COMEDIES.

With Introductions, Notes, and a Life of Oliver Goldsmith,

BY

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LIFE OF OLIVER GOLDSMITH

NOBODY," says Dr. Johnson, "can write the life of a man but those who have eat and drunk and lived in social intercourse with him." If this be true generally, it is especially true in relation to Oliver Goldsmith—one whose disposition was so impulsive, candid, and simple, that he was ever showing his inmost nature—its frailties and its foibles, as well as its virtues and its loveliness—to all around him. The glimpses that we get from contemporary writers, above all from Boswell, of this genial, social, shy, irritable, amiable, blundering, witty, vain, and highly endowed man, who was always the delight, though often the butt of his friends in the club at "the Turk's Head," make us feel that a contemporary hand could alone have produced a true picture of one whose life was made up so much of the picturesque of gesture and manner, and a thousand idiosyncrasies. The value of a contemporary biography is, indeed, admirably enforced by Goldsmith himself. "A poet, while living, is seldom an object sufficiently great to attract much attention; his real merits are known but to a few, and these are generally sparing in their praises. When his fame is increased by time, it is then too late to investigate the peculiarities of his disposition; the dews of morning are past, and we vainly try to continue the chase by the meridian splendour." One there was who could have executed the pious task with the erudition of a scholar, the skill of a critic, the tenderness of a love almost parental, who knew him more thoroughly, and appreciated him more truly than did any other; who guided him in his trials, cheered him in his labours, rejoiced in his fame, mourned over his death, and composed the epitaph for his grave. Samuel Johnson, who wrote the life of Savage, should not have left that of Goldsmith for the hands of strangers. That he meant to write the biography of his friend there is little doubt. Posterity must ever regret the causes that frustrated that design.

Let us pass from the grave to the cradle—from the unknown spot in the Temple burial-ground to the perished homestead at Pallas. Rising gently from the banks of the Inny is a spot where a few humble houses form a hamlet; one of them has disappeared, that in which Oliver Goldsmith was born.* It passed into the hands of "the fairies," who, in Ireland, at least, do not keep tenements in repair, and are never ejected. And so it crumbled away. Some two hundred years ago the family of Goldsmith migrated from England and settled in Ireland. They had good blood in their veins (it is said even the *sangre azul* of Spain), they maintained a respectable position in society, and always contributed a minister, and sometimes even a dignitary to the Reformed Church. Family characteristics are usually as distinctively marked and as well preserved in the human as in the lower animals. So it was with the Goldsmiths. They were ever right-hearted and generally wrong-headed; benevolent, unworldly, improvident, and poor. Shallow people called them oddities, shrewd people called them fools. One of them, Charles, following the family instinct, took holy orders, and then, in 1718, took a wife, the daughter of his schoolmaster, the Rev. Oliver Jones, of Elphin, in the county of Roscommon. The young couple went to reside at Pallas. They were poor enough, eking out with difficulty an annual pittance of about £40 between the profits of farming, the stipend of the chapel of ease of which he was curate, and what Mrs. Goldsmith's uncle, Mr. Green, allowed the young man for assisting him in the discharge of his parochial duties in the neighbouring parish of Kilkenny West. But poor clergymen are generally rich in children, and Charles Goldsmith was no exception to the rule. They came quickly enough; so that on the 10th November, 1728 O.S., Oliver brought up the number born at Pallas to five, which was afterwards increased by three more. The death of Mr. Green within two years brought promotion to the struggling curate, who succeeded to the living of Kilkenny West and an income of near £200 a-year; and thereupon the family removed to Lissoy, in Westmeath, about three miles from Ballymahon. He who visits the scene of the poet's early life is still shown the blackened and roofless walls of what a loving faith believes to be the house where he dwelt, and the district is still rife with the memories of the boy. "A dull boy he was," said Elizabeth Delap, who first put a hornbook into his hand. Ah! it requires some more reliable testimony than that of an old woman—old beyond ordinary longevity—to gain credence for such a statement. Careless and idle he was under the woman's rule, but dull never. The boy that hated the thumbing of a primer and the

* The researches of Sir James Prior would seem to have set at rest the rival claims of Leitrim, Roscommon, and Westmeath for the honour of the poet's nativity: nevertheless his mother's family still maintain that he was born at Ardnegown, in Roscommon, his grandfather Jones' house, now called Smith Hills. Mr. Joseph Goldsmith, the poet's great-grandnephew, writes to me (February 20th, 1864), "The late Jones Lloyd, who lived at Smith Hills, near Elphin, told me that Oliver Goldsmith was born in his house." He had the information from their common grandmother.

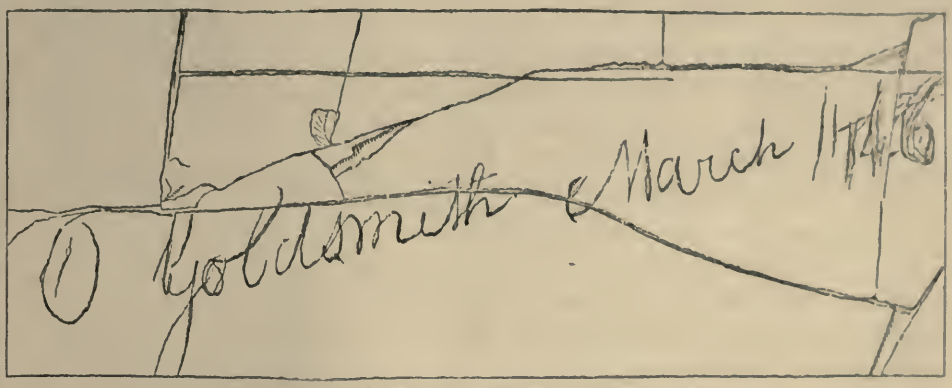
confinement of the schoolroom, when, outside, the sun was shining and the birds singing, loved to wander through the haunted scenery of the wild, yet not unlovely district, to commune with his own heart, to gather up the legends from the people, and fill his ears with the melodies of the famous harper Carolan, who then wandered through the country a welcome guest at every homestead. Some little rudimentary education Oliver received from the magnate of the village school of Lissoy, an old veteran who had fought in the Spanish wars. A genius in his own way was Quartermaster Thomas Byrne, a fitting pedagogue for little Noll, now six years old. His soldiering life furnished him with a rich store of strange adventures, which he delighted to recount; he was a votary of the Muses, too; wrote verses and dealt in big words. His head was crammed with all the legends of the county, and he believed devoutly in ghosts and hobgoblins. Tradition has preserved the outlines of his character, but the picture has been filled in with inimitable vividness and humour by his pupil in that exquisite portraiture of the schoolmaster in "The Deserted Village." Under such a Mentor, book learning, of course, made little progress; but no doubt the native germs of romance and poetry were insensibly nurtured. Young Noll was familiar with the wild raids of robber and rapparee, knew every haunted spot in the county, loitered o' nights about *Knock-ruadh*, where the fairies danced around the elfin light, and had actually perpetrated rhymes, to the delight of his mother.

But these pleasant days soon came to an end. He was smitten down in his eighth year with a terrible malady in its severest form, and he escaped with difficulty the jaws of death to rise scarred and pitted with the small-pox. Poor boy! disfigured for life, awkward, ungainly, and odd, he was sent forth to that microcosm of probation and suffering, a public school. John Goldsmith, his uncle, resided at Ballyoughter, in the neighbourhood of Elphin, and thither he was sent to attend Mr. Griffin's school in that town. These were changed times for Oliver. His uncle, it is true, had discernment enough to see that there was something beyond the common in the boy, and pronounced him "a prodigy for his age," but his school-mates pronounced him a blockhead—little better than a fool; he was accordingly a butt for their practical jokes, and one whom everybody made fun of. A blockhead! So he seemed to the thoughtless mates that cuffed and jeered him. But genius in its abstractions, its moodiness, its solitariness, its shyness, often eludes the observation of ordinary intellect, working all the more inwardly that its outward exhibition is impeded. Yet would the sense of injury or insult at times arouse the indolent and kindly nature of the lad to resist an affront with a promptness of wit that told of a power which could make itself felt; and several anecdotes are preserved which display the same spirit in the boy that flashed out in the "Retaliation"—the last light of the genius of the man.

THE PARSONAGE AT LISSOY.

After about three years Oliver was removed to a school in Athlone, kept by a clergyman named Campbell, and thence he was transferred to a similar institution in Edgeworthstown—that of the Rev. Patrick Hughes. We are not without some memorials of him during those days, derived from fellow-students. Idle, and desultory in his application, he yet evinced a love for the Latin poets and historians. His shyness would at times give place to the dash of one who loved fun and adventure; and he was often the ringleader in some boyish exploit, and as often the victim of the frolics of his playmates. There can be no doubt that by the time he had reached his fifteenth year, his family were convinced there was too much good stuff in the young man to be used up in the drudgery of a trade. A mother's instincts told her he was destined for better things, and she pleaded not in vain with the good pastor. He must be sent to college. But how was this to be compassed? His brother Henry had already entered as a pensioner, and the family purse, drawn upon by other domestic events, could ill bear any further depletion. A charter of Charles I. allowed the Fellows of Trinity College, Dublin, to appoint a certain number of sizars—poor scholars; these were educated without expense, had free lodgings in the garrets, and were permitted to "batten on cold bits," the remnants that left the commons'-table, where in return they were obliged

to attend and to discharge other menial duties.* To educate, even on such terms, those who could not afford to pay, was not undeserving of praise; but, to the credit of the college, everything degrading in the position of a sizar has been dispensed with, and to-day it is looked on as an honourable evidence of superior scholarship. As a sizar, then, must Oliver enter. So distasteful was the proposition to him, that for a year, he refused to obey, and was only persuaded at last by one who had been himself a sizar—that "Uncle Contarine" who appears so often in his after life as his best friend; and so, on the 11th June, 1744,† he was admitted a sizar of Trinity College, Dublin. It is deeply interesting to look over the names that occur in the records of the college as contemporary students with Goldsmith: Barnard, afterwards Bishop of Limerick; Marlay, who filled the See of Water-



FAC-SIMILE OF PANE OF GLASS TAKEN FROM GOLDSMITH'S ROOM.

ford; Richard Malone; and the learned Dr. Michael Kearney, who became a senior Fellow of his college and Professor of History; and above all, the great Edmund Burke, who was destined in after years to be his friend and companion in the Literary Club. The poor boy knew none of these at the time. Another Edgworthstown pupil, John Beatty, obtained a sizarship at the same time, and the two were occupants of the same garrets in No. 35, the extreme southern chambers of a range of buildings that formed the eastern side of Parliament Square, which has long since been taken down. On one of the window panes Goldsmith cut his name, and the relic is still preserved in the college.‡ A couple of relatives, too, there were; and these, with Beatty and

* I can find no evidence of the sizars having ever worn red caps, as stated by Mr. Forster; and the universal belief of the authorities is against it.

† Sir James Prior has fallen into an error (adopted by Mr. Forster) in assuming that the entry of June, 1744, in the college books, represents the year 1745. Though for some purposes the college year commenced in July, the date of the civil year was invariably followed in all entries in the books. At that period, and until 1752, the civil year commenced on the 25th March. The entry in the register, which I have carefully examined, is, therefore, correct both as to the year of Goldsmith's admission into college, 1744, and as to his age, "Annum agens, 15." He was not sixteen till the November following.

‡ Mr. Forster erroneously states, in his "Life of Goldsmith" (in which he is followed by Macaulay), that the name may still be seen in the room, and quotes Prior as his authority. What was correct when Prior wrote in 1836, was not so when

Bob Bryanstone, afterwards, seem to have been his only friends. The college life of Goldsmith is not one on which we dwell with pleasure. His tutor, the Rev. Theaker Wilder, a man of some mathematical ability, was violent in temper, insolent, and overbearing in manners, and of a harsh, vicious, and brutal nature. Oliver detested mathematics, and so incurred the wrath of his tutor, which the indolence and thoughtlessness of the pupil gave too many occasions to gratify. He was subjected to taunts, ridicule, and insults almost daily, sometimes even to personal chastisement from one who, exercising over him the rights of a master over a servant, persecuted him with unremitting rancour. Still Oliver was not without some white days in his college career. More than once he received "the thanks of the house" for his attendance at morning lecture, and this, too, in midwinter, at seven o'clock. It is useless to speculate what the young man's progress might have been under kindlier treatment. Brutality first outraged and then discouraged a sensitive nature. He sought relief from his wretchedness sometimes in dissipation, often in reckless disrespect of discipline—he wasted his time, neglected his studies, and dissipated the scanty supplies which his father could afford him. But even those supplies were soon to cease. Early in 1747, that father was snatched from him. How truly the son loved and revered the parent is proved in that enduring and pious monument which, in after years, he reared to his memory. The image of that father seems ever present when he would portray humanity in its loveliest aspects. First sketching him, with all his pleasant foibles and large-heartedness, in the "Citizen of the World," then recurring to the subject for a fuller treatment and a more accurate delineation in the "Vicar of Wakefield," and at last lavishing all the riches and all the power of his love in the production of that portrait of the pastor in the "Deserted Village," so exquisite, so pathetic, so finished, and so lovely, that it seems to this hour unrivalled in its excellence. Scant as were the young man's resources before, they now become scantier. His widowed mother leaves the parsonage, and takes a lodging in Ballymahon, living "in low circumstances and indifferent health, *nigra veste senescens;*" and he is cast pretty much on his own ways and means. The genius that brutality checked was quickened at the call of "squalid poverty." To supply the pressing wants of daily life, he wrote ballads for street minstrels. There was a printer of the name of Hicks who

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Forster adopted it. The building was taken down in 1837, when the portion of the pane on which the name was written was preserved, and is now in the manuscript room of the college. My friend, the Rev. Dr. Todd, F.T.C.D., the learned librarian, has kindly permitted me to give a fac-simile of it (the only one ever published) in this work, and communicated to me the history of its preservation. When the buildings were about being taken down, Provost Lloyd, at the suggestion of Dr. Todd, had the sash of the window on which the name was written removed to the library. "On examining it," writes the Doctor, "I thought it was not the genuine scratch, which I well remembered, and I mentioned my suspicions to the Provost. Shortly afterwards the last occupant of the rooms sent to the Provost the bit of glass which contained the genuine name, which you have seen. He had attempted to cut the piece out of the window, but, owing to the thickness of the glass, he broke it in several places, and to repair the accident, he had the fragments put together and imbedded in a piece of wood." The counterfeit pane was long shown in the library as the original, which all the time lay safely locked up in the MS. room.

published broadsides at the sign of the Reindeer, far away in Mountrath Street, at the other side of the city. Queer things they were—dying declarations and last speeches of wretches going to be hanged; sacred songs with grotesque illustrations; elegies on defunct celebrities; and popular songs to boot. Thither he brought his songs, and sold them for a crown apiece,* often spending the money on his way home, yielding to some sudden impulse of sensibility awakened by the sight of real or feigned distress. Then in the evening he would steal out of college, and, with all the vanity of an author, follow the steps of the ballad singers and listen to his own songs.

Who shall tell what visions of future fame filled the brain of "the poor scholar" of Trinity as he made his way back to the college? The dreams that visited his pillow in the garret may have transformed the humble auditory of the darkly-lighted street into an admiring throng of the fair and the great and the learned, listening in brilliant saloons to the muse of the world's favourite. Ah! who knows? Surely no man ever attained to intellectual greatness, above all to literary greatness, who has not been vouchsafed, to comfort him in his struggles and keep his hope from dying out utterly, these prophetic glimpses of "coming events," which cast not "their shadows" but their lustre "before," upon the gloomy foreground of the present. And so he struggles on—now penniless, pawning books and other property for the exigencies of existence; now flinging away his scanty shillings with the recklessness of a millionaire; now studying fitfully, now joining in some daring breach of discipline, led on by a love of fun and an exuberance of spirits that prudence could not repress, nor poverty extinguish. Under such an impulse it was that, with other wild lads, he followed "Gallows Walsh" into the haunts of the city bailiffs, and dragged forth the offender who dared to arrest a student, bore their victim within the walls, and soused him in the cistern. That was but a trifle; who cared about a bum-bailiff? But they went further. Wild with excitement, they rushed to Newgate Prison, which they attempted to force, were repulsed by the fire of the gaoler, resulting in the death of two and the wounding of several more. The college authorities visited the offenders with well-merited punishment; four were expelled, and Goldsmith, with others, was "publicly admonished." The admonition was not without its fruits. Oliver took it to heart and read for a scholarship. He failed, but the same page of the college books that records the successful candidates, under date of June 15th, 1747, gives his name amongst those who were comforted for their failure by an "exhibition" of trifling value. It was, possibly, to celebrate this solitary honour† that Goldsmith assembled in his

* I have searched through all the volumes of broadsides in Trinity College for one of Goldsmith's songs, but without success, though I found many of Hicks' publications.

† In a letter with which Sir James Prior has recently favoured me, he says, "As to the premium, I fear there is no proof now in existence that he obtained it. Dr Kearney, indeed, was an excellent authority, as being once a fellow-student and

ENTRANCE GATE OF TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

chambers a few friends, including some of the other sex. They had supper, and a dance followed. In the midst of the festivity Wilder burst in upon them. He assailed the master of the feast, first with coarse and violent vituperation, and then struck him. Such an insult, in the presence of his guests, was intolerable. Smarting under the degradation, the sensitive spirit of the true-born gentleman could not endure to meet those in whose presence he was disgraced. He fled from college, and in a few days, when reduced to his last shilling, left the city for Cork, with the intention of going to America. We pass over the history of his sufferings. Starving and half naked, he at last made his way to his brother Henry, and finally was induced to return to college. The spring Commencements of 1749 terminated his college life, when he took his degree of B.A. on the 27th of February.* As he passed out for the last time through the wicket in that massive gate beside which he so often loitered, how little did he think that the time would come when he should stand there, in the mimic bronze, for ever—no loiterer now; friendless, nameless, neglected—but honoured and admired, one of the great names that fill all lands, and ennoble their own! There he awaits a day, not far distant, when on that vacant pedestal at the opposite side of the gate shall arise and rejoin him his great fellow-countryman, the friend of his later years, who had entered this very college the same year, and, like him, had found his fame in London, and became one of the lights of the world—Edmund Burke.† But no such thought cheered the heart of the poor scholar as he made his way back to Ballymahon, to the humble lodgings of his straitened mother. He was now close to all

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afterwards fellow of the college. We need, therefore, scarcely doubt it." Prior, however, was unable to find any record of the fact, and there is little that has escaped his diligence. I have renewed the search with no better success, but with a stronger conviction that no such honour was obtained by Goldsmith.

* Of this fact, inferentially proved by Prior, I have got direct evidence by the inspection of the Book of Registry of degrees, through the kindness of the Rev. Dr. Luby. The following is the entry:—"Die Februarii vicesimo septimo, 174⅞. Admissi ad gradum Baccalaureatus in Artibus." Then follow the names of the graduates, and amongst them that of "Oliverus Goldsmith." Wilder, his old enemy, was junior proctor, and so saw the first and last of him.

† "I perceive," writes Sir James Prior to me, "that you have been lately inaugurating his statue in Dublin. The fixing it there should have been done long before: but as it promises to be the precursor of other men of eminence, let us not quarrel now with the delay. A statue is, indeed, an admirable method of commemorating men of distinction. Seen daily or hourly in the streets, we cannot forget the personage. We do not shake hands with, but may gaze or glance at him; pause to recall some trait of character, or memorable incident of his life; and, perhaps, are tempted homeward to examine such of his pages (if an author) as throw new or additional interest over fame already well won." I avail myself of this opportunity of giving to the public an inscription written by Sir James Prior for the pedestal of the statue of Goldsmith:—

"Where Genius dwelt and grew in Classic Halls,
We proudly turn, as taste or learning calls;
Pay to the gifted dead the honours due,
And if we may, a kindred fame pursue.

"Goldsmith! We greet thee here.—Away too long—
Welcome thy humour, pathos, prose, and song!
Strewn o'er the page of lettered grace and ease,
By that resistless Art—the power to please;
Each gift the prompting of a genial mind,
The heart as open as the hand was kind;
Who oft in need, a wanderer, and in woe,
Gave to sad poorer all thou couldst bestow.
Oh! if on earth such Spirits re-appear—
So good, so gifted—guide thy fellows here!"

the haunts of his early life, and gave way to his indolent and reckless habits. We find him wandering from the house of one friend to that of another—always careless, joyous, and convivial, and sharing in the athletic sports of the country; now lolling in the window of his mother's house, playing the flute, or composing verses; now at the club which he established at George Conway's inn, at Ballymahon, presiding amid uproarious mirth, and singing songs and playing cards; then he would stray by the river-side, to catch a trout or to hunt an otter; besides, he went, now and then, to help brother Henry, who had succeeded to his father's curacy, and earned his livelihood by the drudgery of a school, at the old house at Pallas. But all this time was not utterly wasted. Assuredly his mind was drawing in from the scenes around him, and from the incidents and associates of daily life, that which, "hived in his bosom like the bag o' the bee," he stored up to reproduce in later times in such exquisite sweetness. Two years thus spent, and Oliver is rising twenty-three, with no occupation. His uncle Contarine proposes the family profession. He presents himself, after much persuasion, to the Bishop of Elphin for holy orders, and fails. Whether the defect was in the inner or outer man—ignorance of theology or a pair of scarlet breeches—posterity is never likely to know, nor will they ever regret the result. He next tries tutor-life in the family of a Mr. Flinn, of Roscommon. One can scarcely fancy an occupation more unsuitable and distasteful to him; and so, after a year of dependence, he suddenly terminated the connection (in consequence of a dispute at the card-table, says his sister Hodson), and in a few days after disappeared from his mother's house. Thirty pounds in his pocket and a good horse under him, he sallied forth, whither?—Who knows? A strange account he gave of himself when, in six weeks after, he reappeared, penniless, bestriding a skeleton which he dubbed with the name of "Fiddleback." He went, he says, to Cork, sold his horse, took his passage to America in a ship which very improperly sailed while he was enjoying himself with his friends. When he had spent his time and all his money, except two guineas, he bought "Fiddleback," and turned his face towards home; divided his last crown with a poor woman; put up with a miserly old college friend for a day; changed his quarters to the house of a hospitable counsellor, with whose two sweet daughters, who played enchantingly on the harpsicord, he lingered day after day, till at last he reappeared at Ballymahon. The story, whether true or false, is told with much humour and *sang-froid*, and is certainly not inconsistent with Goldsmith's nature. Perhaps it was his first essay in novel writing—a reality or two for a foundation, and a picturesque superstruction of fiction. Uncle Contarine came to his aid, and, with inexhaustible liberality, supplied him with fifty pounds to go to London and study the law. Alas! Dublin lay in the route to London, as Cork did to America. Each was fatal to Oliver's destination. At Dublin he fell in with

old acquaintances and old vices, and lost all his money at the gambling-table. There he remained, starving, mortified, and contrite, till at last he is invited back to the country. His mother, poor soul, was very angry, and would not for a time forgive him, and so he had to take refuge with his brother Henry. But what use was there in being angry with such a wayward being, who had absolutely no strength to resist temptation. Uncle Contarine was more practical: he forgave, and again was active in his service. A family council is called; what is to be done for him in the way of a profession? It is Hobson's choice; physic alone is left. And so they make a stock purse, uncle Contarine, as usual, contributing; and in 1752 he is sent to Edinburgh to commence his studies. What he gained by his medical studies there we know not; probably not much, if we are to judge from his professional attainments in after life. He attended lectures, and seems to have been fond of chemistry and natural history; he contracted some friendships, too, that stood to him in after life; but he was still the same hilarious, reckless, convivial fellow that sang songs and wrote them, too, and spent his money freely and foolishly, and dressed gaudily (as his tailor's bills discovered by Mr. Forster testify), just as at Dublin and Ballymahon. But he neither liked the country, the people, nor their habits, though he was sometimes in very good society. So after eighteen months' residence in Edinburgh, he embarked for Bordeaux, not without drawing on the inexhaustible Uncle Contarine. Here came new adventures. The vessel put in at Newcastle from stress of weather. Oliver goes on shore with some pleasant companions, "to refresh" themselves, as he mildly phrases it. In the midst of their tavern merriment one evening, they are arrested on suspicion of being French recruits, and are thrown into prison, whence he is liberated after a fortnight's durance. Happy arrest! the vessel had sailed on her voyage, but was wrecked, and all on board were drowned. He found a ship bound for Rotterdam, in which he safely arrived there, and thence made his way to Leyden. Here he remained a year: he says he studied; perhaps he did—not much of physic, but a good deal of men and manners. He got a little money by teaching English, but, improvident as ever, he was sometimes without the price of his dinner; and once, at all events, with his pockets filled by Fortune at the gambling-table, to be as speedily emptied by the fickle goddess the next evening.

Restless as ever, the love of a vagrant life now came strong upon him. He would travel and see the world, and fill his mind with better knowledge than that of medicine. True, he had no money, but what of that? Others in like case had traversed Europe. Holberg had done so when younger than he, with nothing but his flute and his voice to help him along. Ah! this is the very thing for him. He can play touchingly on that old Ballymahon flute, and sing sweetly, as all his boon companions confess: he has a strong frame

and a vigorous constitution, a light heart and an irrepressible spirit. What more is wanting? So away he trudges, in February, 1755, having first, with a generosity ludicrous, yet touching from its gratitude, spent nearly his last coin in a purchase of tulip roots for Uncle Contarine.

We must ever regret that Goldsmith kept no record of his wanderings or his impressions. One has to track him in letters, which are scanty, and in characters and sentiments in his works, which are of no certain application. We get a view of him at Louvain, where it is said, on slight authority, that he got the degree of M.B.; then we get glimpses of him at Antwerp, and Brussels, and Maestricht, and so into France, now housed in some hospitable convent, now sheltered in a barn. Foot-sore, and weary, and hungry, it might be, the shades of evening often fell around him as he approached some peasant's humble homestead; then, he says, speaking in the character of George Primrose, but, doubtless, of himself, "I played one of my most merry tunes, and that procured me not only a lodging, but subsistence for the next day." Hard schooling that, but not without its pleasure and its profit—a deeper teaching into the inner nature, an experimental knowledge of the social relations of classes of humanity, as well as a closer intimacy with the physical charms of Nature. He learned to know that if the taste of the peasant was less refined than that of the peer, his heart was more tender, his hand more open to the unaccredited stranger; he found the strange, wise words of his great Master, that his good father had doubtless so often read for him when a boy, now verified—"Blessed are the poor." Yes, the poor were cheerful. "I ever found them," he says, "sprightly in proportion to their wants. I once or twice attempted to play for people of fashion, but they always thought my performance odious, and never rewarded me even with a trifle."

We find him next in the French capital, studying chemistry ostensibly, but studying life much more deeply in theatres and saloons, for somehow he appears to have made his way into society. From Paris to Switzerland, taking the route of Strasburgh and crossing the Rhine, he reaches Geneva, and there it was, doubtless, that he made the acquaintance of Voltaire, of whom he has given a clever and vivid sketch in a fragmentary memoir that records an evening spent at *Les Delices*. There is reason to believe that it was at Geneva that he joined, in the capacity of companion, a young wealthy and penurious Englishman, the very reverse of Goldsmith in everything. Such an ill-assorted union could not last long, so after crossing the Alps and entering Italy, they parted at Leghorn, the miser returning to England by long sea for cheapness, and Oliver, with the few pounds of his hard-earned salary, to push his way through Italy. Here, we suspect, his flute was of little use. "My skill in music," says the philosophic vagabond, "could avail me nothing in Italy, where

GOLDSMITH PLAYING FOR THE FRENCH PEASANTRY.

every peasant was a better musician than I." Poverty, however, is ingenious in resources, so he gave up melody and took to disputations. He "disputed" for his dinner and a night's lodging at every university and convent, and, if we are to receive "the vagabond's" account as true, he often won bed and board and a small gratuity in money to boot. Thus he traversed Northern Italy from west to east; saw Florence and Milan, Verona, Mantua, and Pisa (where it is said he obtained a degree), and at last stood in the city of Venice. Then home-longings came upon him, and poverty grew more pinching; the generous hand of Uncle Contarine was closed in death, and there was none other to aid him, so the vagrant turned his steps towards Britain, and disputed and begged his way back through Italy, and over the Alps in winter, and was once more in festive France. There the flute and the song again sustain the wanderer, till at last, on the 1st of February, 1756, he stands on the quay of Dover. Well nigh two years have passed since, with a few pounds in his pocket and with little expectations of more, he had undertaken what in those days was a pilgrimage full of peril and difficulty. How irrepressible must have been his passion for knowledge, how brave his heart, how strong his courage! And as he stood there on the pier, alone, friendless, penniless, what thoughts may have swelled his heart with hope and conscious pride! Had not the idler at Ballymahon, the loiterer in college, the spendthrift at Edinburgh, done somewhat to redeem his misspent time, to educate himself in the knowledge of mankind, and to elevate himself in his intellectual position? Might he not now stand amongst the great men of his day, and yet hold his head as high as any of them? Ay, only let him have the opportunity to give to the world the treasures of thought that he had stored up within him. And where was this opportunity to be found but in the great mind-market of the world—LONDON? So to London he turned his steps, and fought his way there, Heaven knows how, battling for very life through that terrible fortnight. At last he stands in the streets of London, face to face with all those horrors that surround the destitute stranger in that populous solitude, and make the heart sink with dismay. Into the deeps of that gloom and misery we may not penetrate if we would. Goldsmith himself seems always to have shrunk from any full revelations of them. There is a sanctity for the degradation of starving genius as there is for the dead within the grave. One cry, however, from those deeps he uttered, exceeding bitter but not unmanly. "Many in such circumstances," he said, "would have had recourse to the friar's cord or the suicide's halter. But with all my follies I had principle to resist the one and resolution to combat the other." Let us pass the uncertain and unaccredited, and come to the reliable. After a thousand failures and repulses, the shy, ungainly, sensitive man, with threadbare garments and an Irish brogue (harmless in foreign lands, but damning within the sound of Bow-bells) finds employment from a chemist on

Fish Street Hill, partly as a charity and partly from his knowledge of chemistry, and that the man saw in him talents above his condition. This gave him a few months to take breath and rest. Then came an unexpected deliverance. One whose friendship he had gained in Edinburgh, the excellent and eminent Dr. Sleigh, happened to be in London. Sunday affords an hour or two of respite, even in a chemist's shop, so Oliver smartens himself up in his shabby-genteel suit, and pays the Doctor a visit. Ah! the poor fellow knew not what a change hard life had wrought in him. "Sleigh scarcely knew me," said he, in describing the interview to a friend; "such is the tax the unfortunate pay to poverty. However, when he did recollect me, I found his heart as warm as ever, and he shared his purse of friendship with me during his continuance in London." Then Dr. Sleigh and apothecary Jacob put their heads together, and they start him as a physician in Bankside, Southwark, in a tarnished old suit of green and gold. His practice was not successful, and lay only amongst the poor. One of his patients, a journeyman printer, suggests that he should call on his master, and so Goldsmith turns "reader" to Samuel Richardson, corrects his press, and becomes acquainted with Dr. Edward Young, then past seventy, serene and imperturbably polite, who used to come up from Welwyn to see his bosom friend, the literary printer of Salisbury Court. But drudgery of printing office and prescribing could scarcely support his existence. All his ambition seemed now but to live, and he accepted an ushership at Dr. John Milner's school at Peckham, in Surrey. There are stories of his short stay here, which show how little trial and misery had changed him. Elastic as ever, his spirit rose the moment the pressure was removed from it; he was the same kind, merry, and generous being, playing off practical jokes and lavishing his scanty stipend, till kind Mrs. Milner suggested that she had better take care of his money as she did for the schoolboys. Still the life of a tutor was hateful to him, as he abundantly testified afterwards in his writings. So he took advantage of the acquaintance which he there formed with Griffiths, the bookseller of Paternoster Row, and engaged with him, in April, 1757, to write for the "Monthly Review" for one year, living with the bookseller and receiving a salary.

And now, at last, Goldsmith begins to realise the life-long cravings of his heart—to fulfil his destiny—to be an author. Mr. Forster has, with great power and vividness, described the condition of literature at that period in England, "when, deserted by the patron and not yet supported by the public, it was committed to the mercies of the bookseller." A more merciless being than Griffiths could not be found—save in the compound Griffiths man and wife. The matrimonial and trade firm worked their Grub Street hack, without intermission, from nine in the morning till two, and sometimes during the whole day and late into the night; and, to the personal discomforts of a penurious house-

GOLDSMITH WRITING FOR GRIFFITHS.

keeping, the woman added the indignity of *correcting* and improving what Goldsmith wrote. The articles written in the "Review" during this period of bondage were first given as such to the public by the industry of Prior; and they show with what liveliness, and force, and critical judgment Goldsmith discharged the functions of a reviewer. This slavery soon became intolerable. Dr. Griffiths mercilessly exacted "the tale of bricks," and then cried, "Ye are idle, ye are idle!" and made his heart bitter with hard bondage; and Mrs. Dr. Griffiths, who, as De Quincy says, "would have broken the back of a camel, which must be supposed tougher than the heart of an usher," cut down his food and cut up his writings. Then came an open rupture, and fierce words and angry recriminations from both sides, and the lease of the human chattel was cancelled by mutual consent, after five months, and Oliver went forth a free man, with the privilege of paying for his dinner, if he had a shilling, and sleeping with "the beggars at Axe Lane," if he could not hire a garret. And in a garret next we find him—"In a garret, writing for bread, and expecting to be dunned for a milk score;" as, with a miserable affectation of pleasantry, he afterwards described his state to Bob Bryanston. They had heard somehow of him

at home in Ireland, and the simple hearts fancied he was a rising genius, who could now give a friend a lift; and so brother Charles came over to share his good fortune, and found his address from George, the waiter at the Temple Exchange Coffee House. A rising genius high enough he found him, when he had scrambled up the stairs. Shocked and confounded, Charles expresses his sorrow. Oliver's heart was too proud to give way even before a brother. "All in good time, my dear boy," said he, with feigned hopefulness; "I shall be richer by-and-by. Besides, you see, I am not in positive want." Charles did not rely much on the present or the future of the poet; so, like a true Goldsmith, he disappeared to seek his fortune in the West Indies, and was not again heard of for thirty years. "Positive want" soon came, notwithstanding hack-writing and doctoring the poor, and he has to fall back for a space upon tutoring and Dr. Milner. But the love of literature still lurks in his heart, and he occupies his spare time in a work on Polite Literature, that he hopes yet to give to the world. Back again into that world he goes in August, 1758, to his garret and his hack-writing, now for the "Critical Review," and the preparation of his essay. At last, a long-promised medical appointment to one of the factories on the coast of Coromandel seems within his reach. He raises a few pounds for his outfit; but the appointment is not confirmed—why, has never been known. Then he endeavoured to gain the post of an hospital mate; presented himself before the Board of Examiners at Surgeons' Hall, and was rejected. So much the better for Oliver: so much the better for the world. He is drawn back, as by a fatality, into the troublous waters—as the wave draws back some wretch that would fain escape—to struggle, and buffet with, and, at last, to ride upon the billows. Back he goes to his miserable life in Green Arbour Court, up Breakneck Stairs, to toil again in the "Critical Review," and write for Griffiths, to whom he is indebted for clothes that he has pawned to relieve his landlord, and for books that he has deposited with a friend to save himself from starving. This debt was repaid by the "Memoir of Voltaire." At last, the essay is ready, and in April, 1759, the "Enquiry into the Present State of Polite Literature in Europe" is published. It bears no author's name; but the author is well known. It is savagely attacked and highly praised. Lord Macaulay, in his ungenial memoir of Goldsmith, says it is of little or no value. This may well be questioned; but, whatever its value at the present, "it was," as Mr. Forster observes, "in advance of any similar effort in that day." "It possessed," says Washington Irving, "novelty in its views and wideness in its scope, and being endued with the peculiar charm of style inseparable from the author, it commanded public attention and a profitable sale." At all events, it made a reputation for Goldsmith, and was the turning-point of his literary life. Publishers now sought him. Wilkie engaged him to write a weekly paper called "The Bee," the first number of which appeared on Saturday, the 6th

October, 1759; but though it contained some charming articles, it had an existence of but eight weeks. At the same time, he was contributing to "The Busy Body," and to "The Ladies' Magazine." Then John Newbery and Smollett enlisted him for "The British Magazine" and "The Public Ledger," in the latter of which appeared the papers afterwards published in a collected form as "The Citizen of the World." Goldsmith now ventured to migrate from his wretched lodging by Breakneck Stairs to a decenter habitation in Wine Office Court. Percy had befriended him; and the great autocrat of literature, Dr. Johnson, was not insensible to the praise of Goldsmith, and spoke handsomely of him in return. Nay, he even accompanied Percy to sup with him on the 31st of May, 1761—a white day in Goldsmith's life, from which may be dated a friendship that was only dissolved by death. In his new abode Goldsmith drudges away, still little better than a Grub Street hack, with visions, now and then, of going to distant lands, and making a fortune by discoveries. We care not to inquire minutely into that hack-work—essays, and sketches, and biographies, often written under the pressure of the moment, and in the hours of sickness—for we find that his health was not proof against the miasma of London garrets, and that he was obliged to go to Bath, where he fell in with Beau Nash, whom he made immortal by writing a very pleasant memoir of him for John Newbery. Next year he falls in with the wits that dropped daily into Tom Davies', the bookseller of Russell Street, Covent Garden; many of them to be more intimate associates, by-and-by, in the Literary Club. At the end of the year he took lodgings in Islington, where he made the acquaintance of Hogarth, who, with Reynolds, often spent a convivial evening with him; after which he would retire to his bedroom, and write a chapter of a work for his neighbour, John Newbery. Pleasant and light writing he found it; and as pleasant reading it proved, and still proves, to the world. 'Twas a "History of England in a Series of Letters from a Nobleman to his Son," which was afterwards converted into the charming "History of England" in two volumes octavo. It was a great success, and the authorship was successively attributed to three literary noblemen. Oliver laughed at the mistake, and enjoyed the success; but Johnson and others knew who wrote the letters, and rejoiced with him too.

And now was established that fellowship which contributed so largely to the happiness of Goldsmith's chequered life—that club, nameless at first, but which, after Goldsmith had passed away, was known as the "Literary Club." Great names now rise before us, and fill every cell of memory with light. Many a brilliant pen has sketched the characters of the giants that were in those days. Let us look in on them, as they sat, on Monday evening, at the "Turk's Head," in Gerrard Street, Soho. It is their first year, while the number of the members was yet limited to nine. They have met some half a

dozen times, and one chair is vacant. So much the better. Hawkins sat in it; but his small mind was at once jealous of, and overawed by, Burke. Hawkins was insolent; Burke demolished him, and the company snubbed him; and so the "unclubbable man" disappeared for ever. Who are the rest? All eyes are turned in one direction, all ears are attent, and one man has put his trumpet to his ear, lest he should lose a word. He has roundish, blunt features, and a florid, full face, beaming with kindness; and, though his eyes are guarded by large round spectacles, his expression is lively and acute. That is Reynolds—the great painter, that even now gets one hundred guineas for a portrait—the founder of the club, and, ere long, to be a knight, the first President of the Royal Academy, and one of the most memorable men of his time. Let our eyes follow with the others. They rest on two men. One, a great, ungainly, and obese figure; a face of massive features, and hanging nether jaw; and the vast facial rotund is framed by a dishevelled wig, innocent of powder, meeting below the ears; a rumpled neckcloth, not over-clean, whereon his double chin reposes—who, but the great Dr. Johnson, the dogmatist and the literary tyrant of his day, who rules his subjects with a rod of iron, and yet tempers ofttimes his savageness with a generous benignity? Now he lolls, and now he lurches, heaving with the freight of great thoughts, which he discharges in big, sententious words, that roll along with a grand boom. He has roused up for the contest with his neighbour—"That fellow (as he said) calls forth all my powers"—and, in the lavish prodigality of his intellectual strength, has undertaken to sustain a paradox, and challenges to the battle with no uncertain sound, the ominous—"Why, no, sir." The other does not invite, while he does not shrink from the combat. You see he is a formidable opponent, athletic and symmetrical; a countenance handsome in feature and dignified by the impress of intellect; a brow expansive, yet at times shadowed and frowning with the workings of thought. He replies with a grave and subtle logic and polished eloquence, and in tones whose not unpleasing Irish doric tell you it is Edmund Burke, the greatest statesman of his age, on whose words listening senates are soon to hang in admiration. Now Johnson dashes at him with his whole weight, but Burke eludes the blow, and winds like a serpent round his assailant. It is a terrible battle. Keen wit and strong common sense, and profound learning and acute reasoning, are wielded with telling effect by the two greatest talkers of their day.* Good Dr. Nugent, half in pride and half in terror, watches each effort of his son-in-law. A tall, slight, graceful man, who has scarcely seen six-and-twenty summers, sits beyond Johnson, and bends forward,

* My distinguished friend, the Right Honourable James Whiteside, in his brilliant lecture on Goldsmith, has acutely observed—"When it is said Johnson was the best talker of his time, it should be added, except Burke. I do not believe Johnson was second to any man in conversational conflict, except to our great countryman. If Burke could have submitted to the persecutions of a Boswell, or if another Boswell could have been found in the world, we might have had ten volumes of Burke's talk of superior quality."

as if hanging in delight on every word of his friend. His arms are crossed upon his bosom, and his gold-mounted snuff-box lies on the table. Who can mistake the aristocratic features, the gentle and smiling countenance of Bennet Langton, who is yet to succeed the great doctor in the chair of Ancient Literature in the Royal Academy? By Langton's side is his Oxford chum, the eccentric Topham Beauclerk, one of the most delightful and accomplished men of his day. What a handsome face! with a strong expression of the Stuarts in it—a dash of arch mischief and the rakish air of one who "knows the world:" he whose talents, Johnson said, he felt more disposed to envy than those of any man he had known. But all those talents and all the doctor's love could not save him from an early death, though he would "walk, sir, to the extent of the earth's diameter" to do so. Anthony Chamier is there, too, the friend of Beauclerk, a man of rank, and well-to-do in the world; member of Parliament for Tamworth, that is, and under-secretary of state, that is to be. And last in our picture is our own dear "Noll," the delight, and the plague, and the butt of them all, decked out in the gaudy finery in which his simple heart delighted; his ugly yet most expressive face, with "the frost-bitten bloom" upon it, beaming with delight, and watching now one combatant and now the other. The battle rages—

> "Boswell's glorious savage butted full,
> Yet our vast boa foils his mighty bull;
> Now glides away in glittering volumes rolled,
> Now coils around in unrelenting fold.
> Which shall prevail? the boldest wight would fear
> Now to adjudge, as then to interfere.
> 'Twixt Burke and Johnson, Jove himself is mute,
> Lest earth should rise to share in the dispute."*

But not so Goldy. He flings himself between the combatants, blurts out something that seems a blunder, but has a certain shrewd wit in it, nevertheless. The doctor roars him down with a—"Sir, your genius is great, but your knowledge is small." Beauclerk launches one of his keen shafts of sarcasm at the offender, and is severely rebuked by Johnson, who will suffer no one but himself to assail his *protegé*. "Sir, you have often given me pain, not from the power of what you said, but from seeing your intention." But there is neither bitterness nor jealousy in the hearts of those friends—least of all, in those of the mighty combatants. Burke, as he goes home with Langton, will say to him, "How very great Johnson has been to-night; it is enough for me to have rung the bell to him." And the doctor, when next day he meets a Mr. James Boswell, a Scotchman who got introduced to him last year, and hangs about him fawningly, and treasures all his words, will tell him what a great

* "St. Stephen's," a Poem, p. 64.

DOCTOR JOHNSON READING "THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD."

variety of knowledge, and store of imagery, and copiousness of language Mr. Burke has. "An extraordinary man, sir! His stream of mind is perpetual. Take whatever topic you please, he is ready to meet you."

In such society time passed pleasantly enough, and the evening meetings at the Turk's Head were the compensations for many a day of privation; for Goldsmith was too imprudent, and his literary remuneration too precarious, to be ever above want. We find him borrowing money as freely from one friend as he parts with it for the necessities of another. Johnson seems to have taken him into his care as tenderly as a father would take a child, counselling, and comforting, and keeping him as straight as he can. At last things have come to the worst. His landlady has arrested him for arrears of rent. Goldsmith has not a farthing, so he writes off to Johnson in his distress, beseeching his friend to come and see him. Johnson sends a guinea by the messenger, with a promise to follow soon. So he does, and finds Oliver in a violent passion at the indignity, and cooling his rage with a bottle of Madeira, into which he had converted the guinea. Noble, tender-hearted Johnson! he knew what it was to owe for his lodgings, and to be hurried away to a sponging-house, and to be relieved by a true friend—and such a friend he is now. "I put the cork into the bottle," said he afterwards to Boswell; "desired he would be calm, and began to talk to him of the means by which he might be extricated." Goldsmith says he has a novel ready for the press, and shows it. "I looked into it and saw its merits; told the landlady I should soon return, and, having gone to a bookseller, sold it for £60. I brought Goldsmith the money, and he discharged his rent, not without rating the landlady in a high tone for having used him so ill." What that novel is we shall know hereafter; now it lies amongst the bookseller's purchases, to be brought out when Goldsmith's name is before the world as a favourite, and is worth something on a title-page. That time is near at hand. The thoughts and experiences of his travel have, during many a dark and lonely hour, been his study and his solace, and he has wrought at them and shaped them into something very beautiful, and accordingly, on the 19th of December, 1764, comes out "The Traveller; or, a Prospect of Society, by Oliver Goldsmith, M.B." Assuredly it took the world by surprise, and even his own friends were of the number. What high philosophic reflection! what life-like painting of nature, moral and physical! what exquisite touches of pathos! what heart-yearnings of human affection! and all clothed in verse so harmonious, in language so simple and yet so dignified! Johnson pronounced it "a poem to which it would not be easy to find anything equal since the days of Pope;" and he read it to Miss Reynolds till she declared that she would never again call Goldsmith ugly. And Fox said "it was one of the finest poems in the English language." And Langton averred that there was not a bad line in it. Then the critics began to praise it, and the

world to believe in the critics, and in a month there was a second edition, and soon after another, and then it made its way into foreign tongues, and got a world's reputation. Dr. Goldsmith became the fashion, and essays and nameless things of his were collected and reproduced, to the great benefit of the booksellers, and with little profit to the author. Oliver thinks that a fashionable poet may become a fashionable physician. He has removed to respectable chambers on the library staircase of the Temple; and out he comes, on a fine summer's day, in 1765, "in purple silk small clothes, a handsome scarlet roquelaure, buttoned close under the chin, a full professional wig, a sword and cane," to practise in higher regions than Bankside. But practice would not come; and somehow an apothecary was thought a safer guide by one of his patients—a lady friend—and Oliver indignantly declares he will prescribe no more for his friends. Then malicious Beauclerk retorts, "Do so, my dear doctor. Whenever you undertake to kill, let it be your enemies!" Yes; there is better work than feeling old ladies' pulses. He will soon feel the pulse of the whole world, as it throbs to his touch. Francis Newbery bethinks him of the novel that he paid £60 for; so he looks it up, sends it to the printing-office, and gives it to the public on the 27th May, 1766: "The Vicar of Wakefield." To-day we look back with something like wonder at the slowness of Johnson's appreciation of its merits. He told Reynolds he did not think it would have much success. Possibly its utter simplicity made him undervalue it. "I looked into it," he said, somewhat coldly, "and saw its merit." The world has been looking into it ever since, and sees its merit—sees it more and more, as time goes on. Criticism has exhausted itself in its praise, in every country and in every tongue. One only—a man whose genius had little in common with that of Goldsmith—has been found to subject it to an unjust analysis, and to censure it upon untenable objections. The unfriendly criticism of Lord Macaulay has been ably refuted by Mr. Whiteside, while he substitutes his own eloquent and genial estimate with a truth and force that command our heartiest assent. But we have a higher criticism to adduce—the criticism by which all critics must ultimately be judged, and from whose judgment there is no appeal—the criticism of the people at large; not of to-day, but of all time; not of one locality, but of every nation. Governed by no scholastic canons, testing by no artistic analyses, but guided by the instincts of the heart and the dictates of the intellect, they pronounce a judgment abiding and irreversible, because slow and matured.

We pause not to record the hack-work which Goldsmith was still forced to continue even while greater things were in preparation. His mind was now turned towards the drama. He attended the theatres, and mixed much in convivial societies and clubs, studying life and nature in the midst of his

hilarity. Thus the comedy of "The Good-Natured Man" was conceived, and in 1767 submitted to the judgment of Johnson, and other members of the Literary Club. Their verdict was favourable; and Johnson offered to write the prologue, declaring it to be the best comedy that had been written since "The Provoked Husband." An estrangement had taken place between Garrick—who was then manager of Drury Lane—and Goldsmith; but kind Joshua Reynolds brought them together at his own hospitable board, and reconciled them. Goldsmith gave the play to Garrick; delays arose; the manager spoke disparagingly of the play; suggested alterations, which the author indignantly resisted, and finally transferred the piece to Colman, the manager of the rival theatre of Covent Garden. At last, on the 29th January, 1768, it was put on the stage. Every actor played as if to damn it, save Shuter; and damned it would have been, but for his "Croaker," whose inimitable humour carried it safely through. Goldsmith, who had been in agonies throughout the performance, overwhelmed him with thanks, and with a desponding heart hurried off to the "Turk's Head," to disguise, in forced merriment, his chagrin; but he broke down when alone with Johnson, and burst into tears. It had a run of ten nights; then fitfully appeared at intervals; and, despite of its merits, never became a stock piece for the stage, though it has ever been a favourite with the reader. But it paid Goldsmith better than better things, and at the end of the time he had £500 in his pocket. Where worse could it have been? From so unsafe a place it was soon removed: £400 of it went to purchase chambers in Brick Court, Middle Temple; the rest in fine furniture. Then followed entertainments and hilarious uproar, singing, dancing, and romping at blind-man's buff, that scandalised the neighbourhood, and shook the ceiling of the room beneath, in which erudite Dr. Blackstone was then composing the fourth volume of his famous "Commentaries," and, it may be, considering whether the distracting tumult overhead came within the category of "common nuisances—such inconvenient or troublesome offences as annoy the whole community"—and, therefore, abateable by indictment; or only a "private nuisance"—as keeping "hogs or other noisome animals" near the house of another—for which he should bring his action at law. Judge Day, of the Irish Bench, who lived far into the days of the present generation, told many a pleasant anecdote of the kind reception he and Henry Grattan met from their good-natured countryman, when students in the Temple. Goldsmith is soon as necessitous as ever, and drudges away at compilations and nameless things; honours, in the meantime, gathering around him; for the King has lately made him Professor of Ancient History to the New Academy—a gift, as he humorously observed, "like ruffles to one that wants a shirt." At times, too, he retreated from the City, and buried himself in the seclusion of his "Shoemaker's Paradise," some eight miles from town, on the Edgware Road. There, sauntering through

green fields and rural scenery—meditating on the social changes which the usurping march of wealth was effecting on the poor—he was composing his immortal poem of "The Deserted Village." His mind, too, was solemnised to tenderness by the recent death of his beloved brother Henry, to whom his heart had ever turned with the "ceaseless pain" of home-love—that brother for whom he had condescended to sue when he scorned to do so for himself, or to hire out his pen to a political party. Father and brother had now both gone to a better world; they had for him no existence on earth but in a loving memory—shadowy, but how beautiful! And thus their individual personalities were blent together, in the poet's fancy—as when one dreams of the dead—into one harmonious vision of ideal excellence: the "pastor" of "The Deserted Village." But this is a labour of thought and time, as well as of love; and, meanwhile, the man who flings away his earnings daily must work at what will give him daily bread. Accordingly, he wrote the "History of Rome," and a biography of Parnell, and worked at his "Animated Nature" at intervals; alternating labour with pleasure, as was ever his wont; enjoying the society of the charming family of the Hornecks, "the Captain" and "Little Comedy," and, above all, the sweet "Jessamy Bride," whose memory will be ever associated with his own.

On the 26th of May, 1770, "The Deserted Village, a Poem, by Dr. Goldsmith," was published. Here is no hesitation as to its reception. The public judgment anticipates the critic's function. Praise is universal, and success immediate. Within a fortnight there is a second edition, four within the month of June, and a fifth in August. "Even his enemies in the press," says Mr. Forster, "were silent, and nothing interrupted the praise which greeted him on all sides." Truly, they were great critics who praised it then—Johnson, and Burke, and Gray—and in every age since great critics have affirmed the praise. Goethe and his friends hailed it with transport. Campbell, Scott, Byron, are loud in eulogy. "The judgment," says Mr. Forster, "has since been affirmed by hundreds of thousands, and any adverse appeal is little likely now to be lodged against it." We wish this last sentence had been qualified in the recent editions of Mr. Forster's work. Some years since, the silence was broken; the adverse appeal was lodged; but the general judgment has not been reversed. In a criticism as astutely censorious as it is palpably unsound, Macaulay has boldly arraigned the decision which a century had confirmed. He arraigns the poem, not for false theories in political economy, but for "an unpardonable fault which pervades the whole," and by which "more discerning judges are shocked." He declares the "poet cannot be pardoned for describing ill; for observing the world in which he lives so carelessly that his portraits bear no resemblance to the originals; for exhibiting, as copies from real life, monstrous combinations of things which never were, and never could be, found together." Admirable

keenness of critical vision! For Lord Macaulay was reserved this notable discovery, that eluded the eyes of all his literary predecessors. The images that he saw were distorted and incongruous, indeed, but it was because the medium through which he looked diffracted and discoloured them. They who went before used no spectacles, and they saw correctly. He put them on that he might see better than they did, and so he saw what never existed. But the arraignment has been answered by an eloquent advocate. Mr. Whiteside thus sums up his able defence:—"I believe that criticism to be erroneous. First, who are the discerning judges who are shocked by the unpardonable fault which pervades the poem? When did they shine? What 'monstrous combinations of things has Goldsmith described, which never were, or could be, found together?' Nothing so unsound in criticism have I ever read. Must the poet fix time, and place, and locality for his poem? * * One single idea is presented by the poet, which is wrought out in the poem to perfection." So let us pass from the criticism of Lord Macaulay. We do not think that it affected the fame of Goldsmith even momentarily. Despite the critic's great name, that criticism will be soon forgotten. Ere passing from the subject, it is well to record a statement made not without authority, strongly illustrative of the character of Goldsmith, as it is highly honourable to him. Having received £100, the price agreed for the poem, a friend remarked it was a great price (five shillings a couplet) for so short a work. "I think so, too," was the reply; "it is much more than the honest man can afford, or the piece is worth. I have not been easy since I received it." So Goldsmith returned the money, desiring the publisher to pay him when it should be ascertained what the poem was worth.

In the summer of 1770 he paid a visit to Paris, in the company of the Hornecks, to find, on his return, the intelligence of his mother's death awaiting him, and to turn again to the labour of his life. His "Memoir of Parnell" had recently appeared, and he now produced an abridgment of his Roman History. Then followed his English History, in four volumes. All this time Goldsmith spent money as fast as he got it. He was a "literary lion," and associated with the nobles and wits of the day, getting venison from Lord Clare, and making him immortal by his poetical acknowledgment; and, alas! loving the card-table too much, and smarting for it. He takes lodgings with a farmer, Selby, in Hyde Lane,* off his favourite Edgware Road, where he spends much of his time strolling about the fields, composing his "Animated Nature;" and, with the leaven of his boyish nature working strongly in him, frequenting country fairs

* To Sir James Prior we are indebted for preserving the identification of this favourite residence of Goldsmith, as he visited it while the son of Farmer Selby was still living, who pointed out Goldsmith's room, and gave some very interesting anecdotes of the poet, whom he well remembered. Sir James recently took me to the house, which, as he describes it, "stands upon a gentle eminence, in what is called Hyde Lane, leading to Kenton, about three hundred yards from the village of Hyde, on the Edgware Road, and commands a view of an undulating country directly opposite, diversified with wood, in the direction of Hendon." I may add that the house, which now belongs to a Mr. Arbon, faces some points south of east, and enjoys a very sweet prospect, having Hendon on the left and the high ground of Hampstead on the right. A garret on the north side of the house is now incorrectly shown as the poet's room.

and merry-makings, and show-booths and strolling players, and forgetting himself back into his early life; ever ready, as of old, to relieve the needy, and to alleviate human misery. Let us pass on. Goldsmith is again in town, labouring, earning, spending; dining and supping out; heedless, extravagant, and always in debt—the epitome of his life, from his first emergence from want in London to the last days of his existence. The year 1773 is come, and he had presented to Colman a comedy to which as yet he had given no name. The action was laid in a country village, and it abounded with such scenes and situations as Goldsmith had experimental knowledge of in early life. The Covent Garden manager read it, and then he thought over it, and so months and months passed on, and yet he gave no decisive answer. Goldsmith wrote in terms too pressing for further delay. "I have, as you know," he concludes his appeal, "a large sum of money to make up shortly; by accepting my play I can readily satisfy my creditor that way; at any rate, I must look about to some certainty to be prepared. For God's sake, take the play, and let us make the best of it, and let me have the same measure at least which you have given as bad plays as mine." Colman returns the MS. with annotations of a very disparaging kind, offering, however, to give the play a trial. Then Goldsmith, in hasty anger, sends it to Garrick. Johnson intervenes, for he, and Burke, and Garrick have read the play and seen its merits; he remonstrates with Colman; the MS. is withdrawn from Garrick, and, after the usual difficulties with author, manager, and actors, out comes, on the 15th of March, 1773, on the boards of Covent Garden, "She Stoops to Conquer." Meantime his friends were determined to make failure impossible. "The Terence of England," Richard Cumberland, has left us a humorous though probably exaggerated account of their preparations: how they assembled at dinner at the Shakespeare tavern, under the presidency of the great Samuel Johnson; how they laid their plans, assigned their posts to the *claqueurs*, and gave them their cues for their plaudits; how the great doctor sat in the front row, with all eyes on him, and when he laughed how everybody roared; how Adam Drummond, "with the most sonorous, and at the same time the most contagious laugh that ever echoed from human lungs," was planted in an upper box, and laughed in the right place and in the wrong, to the manifest peril of the performance. But the piece needed not the aid of these friendly conspirators. It was received by the audience "with the utmost applause." Even the fastidious Horace Walpole, despite of his sneer,* was forced to accord a qualified praise. To-day we do not wonder that it carried all hearts along with it. Its humour, though broad and farcical, is never coarse; it is full of vivacious dialogue, the characters are admirably drawn and thoroughly natural, and the situations and ludicrous

* When Walpole heard that Goldsmith called the play "She Stoops to Conquer"—"Stoops, indeed," said he; "so she does, that is, the Muse; she is dragged up to the knees, and has trudged, I believe, from Southwark fair."

incidents add great liveliness to the play, and produce the happiest stage effects. It had a run to the end of the season, was played by command, and realised for the manager between £400 and £500 in the first three nights. Then it appeared in the Haymarket, and the following winter at Covent Garden again, and so it has continued a favourite, and has come down to our own days with unimpaired popularity. A foolish affair arose out of Goldsmith's success. Kenrick, his old enemy, assailed him anonymously in the "London Packet," and introduced the name of the "Jessamy Bride." Goldsmith caned Evans, the printer, supposing him to be the writer. Evans brought an action, which Goldsmith compromised, and wrote a clever and spirited letter, maintaining that, while every man should be the guardian of the press, he should "endeavour to prevent its licentiousness becoming at last the grave of its freedom." A just and a noble sentiment, which drew from Johnson the remark, "He has indeed done it very well, but it is a foolish thing well done."

One might now expect that with a reputation firmly established, a favourite poet, a popular novelist, a successful dramatist, the condition of Goldsmith, if not one of affluence, would assuredly have been that of comfort and freedom from care. Alas! it was not so. Money for Goldsmith was less a release from debts than an incentive to extravagance. Increase of funds brought increase of expenditure. The attractions of club-life, the passion for all social pleasures, the love of dress, and it is to be feared the love of play—all these, added to a nature reckless, improvident, generous even to squandering, and ever disposed to banish in present enjoyment the thoughts of the future, made him always poor—poorest often when he was acquiring most. Accordingly, his life henceforth, apart from the drudgery of writing for daily necessities that arose as fast as they were satisfied, is to be traced in the clubs which he frequented, at dinners and festivities, often the delight, oftener the amusement of those around him. Through all these scenes we shall not pursue him. To what purpose should we do so? If we see him in the Literary Club happy, thoughtless, uttering a thousand sprightly things, and as many silly ones, we see but the picture in the sunlight. We must look at it with the shadows falling around it, sobering, and saddening, and darkening it. We must follow him home, to find him struggling under the almost hopeless pressure of the difficulties which his own imprudence was perpetually creating; writing books, not for money, but to complete the contract, the price of which he had already received and expended, and projecting new labours upon the proposed execution of which again to raise money in advance. Thus it was that he toiled on at his "History of Animated Nature" till it was published in 1774—a work which, with all its faults, and they are many, "presents," as Sir Walter Scott observes, "to the ordinary reader a general and interesting view of the subject, couched in the clearest and most beautiful language, and abounding with excellent reflections

A DINNER AT THE LITERARY CLUB.

and illustrations." This brought him no money; the price was paid and spent long ago; and so, in the meantime, the wants of the hour were supplied by his Grecian History, at which he wrought from day to day. He projected, too, a "Popular Dictionary of Arts and Sciences," to which Johnson, Burke, Reynolds, and Dr. Burney promised to contribute, but the publishers will not advance a farthing upon it, for they had but little dependence upon the industry and perseverance of Goldsmith for so great an undertaking. Then, sick at heart and despairing, he falls back upon Garrick, and offers to alter an old comedy and write a new one. Some time, too, before this, his friends endeavoured to procure a pension for him from the Government. Johnson had most deservedly obtained one, and so had Murphy and Kelly upon merits more questionable; and it was hoped that the claims of literature would be acknowledged irrespective of the considerations of party. But such claims were disregarded; Goldsmith lay under the ban of political independence. "He had refused to become a Ministerial hack when offered a *carte blanche* by Parson Scott, the Cabinet emissary." Sir John Hawkins called him an idiot for his conduct, and so thought the wise men in power. Pensions are not for fools; so they left him to his folly, poor and unpensioned.

We approach the end. It is terrible to look into the last days of Goldsmith's life: joyless dissipation to stifle mental anguish; the weariness and depression of that drudgery which "lowers the spirits and lacerates the nerves" of the literary man, toiling at his labour "when the heart is not in unison with the work upon which it is employed." Bewildered, disheartened, desperate, yet hiding from the true friends that would aid him the extent of his embarrassments, he at last forms the resolution to sell his chambers in the Temple, abandon the town, and seek in the retirement of his favourite Hyde, whither he had now fled, quiet henceforth for his distracted mind, and some chance of retrenchment of his expenses. Alas! it was not to be. His mind was now diseased beyond ministration. The struggle was killing him. He became nervous, absent, irritable, and strangely moody amongst those social scenes into which he rushed in the vain hope of flying from himself. His companions notice all this—notice it often, it is to be feared, but to make him the object of a thoughtless banter or pungent jest, that must have wrung the gentle and loving heart that they knew not was breaking. It was at one of those meetings at St. James's Coffee-house that the last sportive sally against Goldsmith stung him into a retort that showed how bright was still the fire of that genius, which suffering could not dim, and death alone could extinguish. The mind evokes that festive scene to-day with a feeling of profound sadness. The quips, and jibes, and jests of the witty men fall flatly upon our senses; the laughter at the tardily-arrived and moody guest sounds like a painful discord on our ears; and all our feelings and sympathies settle upon that poor heart-broken and kindly-

souled man, who, seeking companionship to banish his sorrow, is greeted by the bitter pleasantry of Garrick's lines. Does he not feel the unkindly ridicule of one whose friendship had never been over-cordial? Aye, keenly. And one of the party tells us he was "rather sore," and looked around to see if there was any other hand to fling a shaft at him. But no ponderous distich rolled from the manly-hearted Johnson; no epigram from the classic Burke. Goldsmith grows very thoughtful, for his spirit is wounded; he will not reply—not now, but hereafter: he is silent, till the friendly eulogy of Cumberland agitates him, and makes him deprecate a kindness when he scorns to complain of an attack. At home in his lonely chamber he meditates upon his revenge. Revenge! the very word seems unsuited to his nature. He *retaliates* with a power that shows, with all his gentleness and love, he is not to be assailed with impunity. At intervals (and what moments of depression, and sickness, and anguish must have intervened between those intervals!) he composed that brilliant "Retaliation," which lay unfinished on the desk when his spirit had passed away: a poem which raises the genius of its author to a higher ground in the estimation of posterity than it would otherwise have occupied, as, had he lived, it would undoubtedly have placed him in a higher position amongst his companions—the safe butt for jokes no more, but the formidable intellect which, however slow to resent, it was not safe to provoke. If a vindication of his genius, wit, depth of observation, and fine perception of character were needed to protect his own from the depreciation of those wise ones in their own conceit, who would call him fool, he has furnished in the poem of "Retaliation" a vindication the most complete. How fine is his revenge upon Garrick!—the vengeance of a Christian gentleman. What coals of fire does he heap upon the head of his assailant! with what critical judgment does he praise! with what a true aim does he thrust home upon the failings of his character! Sharp and trenchant is the wound, but the sting has no poison in it. If "wronged affection" wrung from him the satire that was all the sharper for its truth, we can understand with what unalloyed pleasure he portrayed that most amiable of men, Sir Joshua Reynolds. It is a consolation to know that the last lines he ever wrote were those of commendation and of love. Let us go back a little. It is the month of March, 1774. Goldsmith is again in town, ill with a low fever and a complaint of some standing. He struggles against his ailments, and wishes to be at the club in Gerrard Street on the 25th. Before evening he is seriously indisposed, with febrile pulse and violent headache. A kindly surgeon-apothecary and a skilful physician prescribe, but he rejects their remedies, and adheres obstinately to his own. Then he grows worse. Another physician is called in; a week of conflict with the disease ensues; at one time there is a strong hope of recovery; but more than bodily disease is at work; he cannot sleep, he cannot take nourishment, he grows

weaker and weaker. "Your pulse," says Dr. Turton, "is in greater disorder than it should be, from the degree of fever which you have. *Is your mind at ease?*" The curt answer justifies the sagacious physician's fears, and reveals what is killing him. "*No, it is not.*" Words never revoked, for he never spoke again; words that leave with us a feeling of permanent sorrow; the last confession wrung from the troubled spirit of him who, in his day, had soothed many an aching heart, had instructed and charmed all who came within the sphere of his influence. The rest may be shortly told. Let us do so in the words of Sir James Prior:—"At twelve o'clock on Sunday night, the 3rd of April, he was in a sound and serene sleep, perfectly sensible previous to falling off; his respiration easy, the skin moist and warm, and the symptoms altogether of a favourable description. A little before four o'clock, the gentleman in attendance, Mr. Hawes not being then employed, was summoned, in consequence of an unfavourable change; he found him in strong convulsions, which continuing without intermission, he expired about half-past four on Monday morning, the 4th April, 1774."

So passed away from the world, in the prime of life, in the full vigour of intellect, one of the greatest geniuses of his country and his day—a man whose fame and popularity have been daily growing deeper, wider, firmer, in the affections of mankind and the literature of England. No public obsequies attended him to his grave, no costly monument marked the spot of his sepulture; but he went to his last resting-place honoured with the tears of Burke, the profound sorrow of Reynolds, and the strong emotion that shook with grief the manly heart of Johnson. Mourners, too, he had, such as the wealthy and the great cannot purchase—mourners unbought and unpurchasable, save by the generous hand and the benevolent heart that were now cold in death. "The staircase of Brick Court," writes Mr. Forster, with genuine pathos, "is said to have been filled with mourners the reverse of domestic: women without a home—without domesticity of any kind—with no friend but him they had come to weep for; outcasts of that great, solitary, wicked city, to whom he had never forgotten to be kind and charitable." Mourners, too, gentle and loving, whose happy domestic hearths will miss his cheering presence and his unabated love—mourners whose love pursues him to the confines of the grave—who crave that the coffin may be again opened to obtain a lock of his hair, to treasure it to the end of a long life.* They laid him to rest, in the Temple burial-ground, on the 9th of April, 1774, when the sun was low in the west. A stone placed in recent times records his name and the date of his death; but none can say that it is laid over his remains, for the spot where he was interred is unknown. A

* "A lady, who was a great friend of Dr. Goldsmith, earnestly desired to have a lock of his hair, to keep as a memorial of him; and his coffin was opened again, after it had been closed up, to procure the lock of hair from his head. This relic is still in the possession of the family, and is the only one of the kind which has been preserved of the doctor."—*Northcote's Life of Reynolds*, i. 327. The lady was Mary Horneck, "the Jessamy Bride," who lived to be nearly seventy.

GOLDSMITH'S TOMB IN THE TEMPLE.

tablet was erected in the vestry of the church in 1837; and a monument in Westminster Abbey, with a Latin inscription by Dr. Johnson, bears the best testimony of a great scholar and critic to the genius, the ability, and the worth of Oliver Goldsmith.

A few words, ere we close, of the author and of the man. A century has well-nigh passed since he was laid in the grave, and his reputation has stood the test of years. The critical judgment of his contemporaries has been affirmed by posterity. Dr. Johnson describes him as "a man of such variety of powers, and such felicity of performance, that he always seemed to do best that which he was doing: a man who had the art of being minute without tediousness, and general without confusion; whose language was copious without exuberance, exact without constraint, and easy without weakness." Goethe, Schiller, and Herder, abroad; Campbell, Scott, Byron, Irving, Talfourd, and a host of others at home, give their assent to this eulogy. "Viewed as a man of letters," says Sir James Prior, "he has long taken his stand, as a classical author, in nearly every species of composition which he attempted; he has not

only exhibited great variety and excellence, but earned the unusual distinction of being equally admired in poetry and in prose." In each of these departments of literature, so rarely united in a high degree of merit in the same individual, Goldsmith attained to eminence. As a prose writer, he combined—with the graces of a style that charms by its elegance, its simplicity, and its purity—sentiments refined without false delicacy, pathos that was never overwrought, and humour that was never forced; a moralist without hypocrisy, a teacher without pedantry, a reformer without intolerance, and a satirist without bitterness. As a poet, we must assign him a higher place still—perhaps the highest in that class which he may be almost said to have created in England. In power of description, whether it be the delineation of nature or of humanity, he is a master; his paintings are all portraits—true, vigorous, characteristic, and finished, with the most effective arrangement of light and shade, of warmth and colour. Here, too, as in his prose, he exhibits his great mastery over the passions; stirring our hearts with the deepest pathos, and moving us with the liveliest humour; all welling up, unbidden and unrestrained, from the sensibilities of a finely-organised and imaginative nature. In the finish and harmony of his versification he is inferior to none; and he rises at times to a sublimity of thought and a grandeur of diction that is equal to the best. There is no poet who holds a wider and a firmer grasp of the sympathies, the affections, and the intellect of every class of readers. While we cannot place him in the highest rank as a dramatist, it must be admitted that he produced one of the most successful comedies of his day, abounding in happy strokes of wit, sprightly dialogue, admirable delineation of character, and humour which, though broad and farcical, is never gross or licentious. To sum up in the words of Johnson:—"Whether, indeed, we take him as a poet, as a comic writer, or as an historian, he stands in the first class. He deserved a place in Westminster Abbey; and every year he lived would have deserved it better."

And of the man, too, we must speak. Let us do so in truthfulness, yet in love. If ever there was one by whose virtues and merits the world has been the gainer, while his faults and his foibles have chiefly injured himself, that man was Oliver Goldsmith. Neither in his own day nor in ours have there been wanting those who have exaggerated his failings and his follies. Garrick has described him—let us hope, more in the spirit of playful satire than with a conviction of its truth—as

"Scholar, rake, Christian, dupe, gamester, and poet;"

while Macaulay, with no friendly pen, has written that "he was vain, sensual, frivolous, profuse, improvident." Scholar and poet he was; and Christian, too, let none be hardy enough to deny him to have been in whom so many Christian virtues shone out. That he was a rake, we have no evidence; and there is much in his character to lead us to believe the contrary. With still less

justice can he be accused of sensuality; for he was moderate, and often abstemious, in the enjoyments of the table, and rarely exceeded in the use of wine. That he was vain is true—the vanity of the child, who knows not, in his simplicity, how to conceal the foible that the grown man of the world cherishes but hides. That he was a dupe, is true also—to the shame of those who duped a candid and truthful nature; and it cannot be denied that the love of excitement, and not the spirit of avarice, drew him often to the gambling-table. Nor can the honest biographer acquit him of improvidence, recklessness, and profuseness: these, indeed, were his most grievous errors, from which he never extricated himself through life, and which brought him prematurely to his grave. This is the sum of the charges that can be brought against him. He had no envy, for it is an error to call that envy which was but the exhibition of an over-honest nature, that could not conceal the pain of slighted merit.

> "If *that* was envy, envy ne'er before
> So much the look of wronged affection wore;
> And ne'er did bee such golden honey bring
> To ruder hands—yet, writhing, leave no sting."*

And his virtues? Shall not they be taken into account, in striking the balance and forming our estimate? Benevolent, generous, loving, and forgiving; frank, and true, and simple; with an independent spirit, that scorned to prostitute his genius to power, or to barter the liberty of a poor but free man for the ease of a pensioned slave. Let us think of all this, and think how lovable he must have been, when we know how much and by whom he was beloved. "Think of him," said Thackeray, "reckless, thriftless, vain, if you like; but merciful, gentle, generous, full of love and pity. He passes out of our life, and goes to render his account beyond it. Think of the poor pensioners, weeping at his grave; think of the noble spirits that admired and deplored him; think of the righteous pen that wrote his epitaph, and of the wonderful and unanimous response of affection with which the world has paid back the love he gave it: his humour delighting us still; his song fresh and beautiful as when first he charmed with it; his words in all our mouths; his very weaknesses beloved and familiar. His benevolent spirit seems to smile upon us; to do gentle kindnesses; to succour with sweet charity; to soothe, caress, and forgive; to plead with the fortunate for the unhappy and the poor." "Let not his frailties be remembered," said Dr. Johnson; "he was a very great man." "Let them be remembered," says Washington Irving, "since their tendency is to endear." We would say, in what we believe a fitter spirit than either, Let them be remembered in regretful love, while we think, with grateful admiration, of his virtues and his genius; and acknowledge how surpassingly great he would have been with a more regulated mind and a stronger nature.

* "St. Stephen's," p. 67.

In closing this brief memoir, I have to acknowledge my obligations to the biographers that preceded me, and whose labours in the field have left but little for me to glean after them. The accurate and exhaustive volumes of Sir James Prior must be considered as the foundation upon which all subsequent biographies of Goldsmith have been built up. The genius of Irving has invested every well-known incident with picturesque attraction; while the philosophic and discursive work of Mr. Forster is deservedly popular. My task has been chiefly that of condensation and selection. If I have corrected an occasional error, or added one or two facts to the stock of former knowledge, I shall not have written in vain.

JOHN FRANCIS WALLER.

THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD

INTRODUCTION.

THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD is a great English classic, in the largest sense of the word. Like the wonderful masterpiece of De Foe, it is a life-like fiction so true to man's nature, in its strength and its weakness, its virtues and its errors, its trials and its triumphs, its sorrows and its joys, that it attracts every human sympathy, and has become a part of our literature,

as permanent as it is widely diffused. We may not predicate a time when it shall cease to be read, or a class or an age which it shall not instruct and delight. It charms the boy to-day, as it delighted Goethe throughout life.

It would be easy to multiply the testimony which great writers in every country have borne to the charms of this composition; but it is needless. We can well understand how, notwithstanding the fears of Dr. Johnson, this tale stole silently upon the world without the eulogy of critics or the appreciation of wits, till it struck its roots deep into the soil of the English heart, and became perennial. Faults it has, but they are few and trifling—forgotten in the charm of style and sentiment by all save the critic. Richardson, Fielding, and Smollett, command now not one reader for every hundred who read this tale of Goldsmith. This need not excite our wonder. He paints Nature as truly as any of them, but without the sententious formality and wearisome particularity of the first, or the coarseness and pruriency of the others.

"The Vicar of Wakefield" is a domestic epic. Its hero is a country parson—simple, pious, and pure-hearted—a humorist in his way, a little vain of his learning, a little proud of his fine family—sometimes rather sententious, never pedantic, and a dogmatist only on the one favourite topic of monogamy, which crops out now and then above the surface of his character only to give it a new charm. Its world is a rural district, beyond whose limits the action rarely passes, and that only on great occasions. Domestic affections and joys, relieved by its cares, its foibles, and its little failings, cluster around the parsonage, till the storms from the outward world invade its holiness and trouble its peace. Then comes sorrow and suffering; and we have the hero, like the patriarchal prince of the land of Uz, when the Lord "put forth his hand and touched all that he had," meeting each new affliction with meekness and with patience—rising from each trial with renewed reliance upon God, till the lowest depth of his earthly suffering becomes the highest elevation of his moral strength.

In this charming work we see the moral nature of Goldsmith more translucently than in anything else that he has written—that thorough honest, unsophisticated nature, full of truth and hope, and love and charity, unsordid and unselfish, improvident yet resilient, rising ever with elastic rebound the moment that the pressure is removed from his spirit; and then the tale flows gracefully, easily along, as some full, clear stream wanders through a varied landscape, now calmly over the daisied meadow, now troublously between rocks and wooded hills, now in light and now in shadow, but always clear and pure, reflecting the heavens over it and the scenes around it. Here we have satire, the gentlest that ever fell from pen; pungent, but the pungency of a pleasant acid, without one drop of gall; humour, the quaintest, the simplest, the slyest; wit that sparkles like dew-drops; pathos that makes its way right to the heart; and with all and above all, an exquisite power of delineating the foibles that make one smile, as well as the fortitude that makes the eye moist: all these render "The Vicar of Wakefield" the most readable, the most lovable, the most imperishable of novels.

NOTE.—The fifth edition (1773) has been adopted in the present publication.

THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD

CHAPTER I.

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE FAMILY OF WAKEFIELD, IN WHICH A KINDRED LIKENESS PREVAILS, AS WELL OF MINDS AS OF PERSONS.

I WAS ever of opinion that the honest man who married and brought up a large family, did more service than he who continued single and only talked of population. From this motive, I had scarce taken orders, a year, before I began to think seriously of matrimony, and chose my wife as she did her wedding-gown, not for a fine glossy surface, but such qualities as would wear well. To do her justice, she was a good-natured notable woman; and as for breeding, there were few country ladies who could show more. She could read any English book without much spelling; but for pickling, preserving, and cookery none could excel her. She prided herself also upon being an excellent contriver in housekeeping, though I could never find that we grew richer with all her contrivances.

However, we loved each other tenderly, and our fondness increased as we grew old. There was, in fact, nothing that could make us angry with the world or each other. We had an elegant house, situated in a fine country, and a good neighbourhood. The year was spent in moral or rural amusement; in visiting our rich neighbours, and relieving such as were poor. We had no revolutions to fear, nor fatigues to undergo; all our adventures were by the fireside, and all our migrations from the blue bed to the brown.

As we lived near the road, we often had the traveller or stranger visit us to taste our gooseberry-wine, for which we had great reputation; and I profess, with the veracity of an historian, that I never knew one of them find fault with it. Our cousins, too, even to the fortieth remove, all remembered their affinity, without any help from the herald's office, and came very frequently to see us. Some of them did us no great honour by these claims of kindred; as we had the blind, the maimed, and the halt amongst the number. However, my wife always insisted that, as they were the same *flesh and blood*, they should sit with us at the same table. So that if we had not very rich, we generally had very happy friends about us; for this remark will hold good through life, that the poorer the guest the better pleased he ever is with being treated; and as some men gaze with admiration at the colours of a tulip, or the wing of a butterfly, so I was by nature an admirer of happy human faces. However, when any one of our relations was found to be a person of a very bad character, a troublesome guest, or one we desired to get rid of, upon his leaving my house, I ever took care to lend him a riding-coat, or a pair of boots, or sometimes an horse of small value, and I always had the satisfaction of finding he never came back to return them. By this the house was cleared of such as we did not like; but never was the family of WAKEFIELD known to turn the traveller or the poor dependent out of doors.

Thus we lived several years in a state of much happiness; not but that we sometimes had those little rubs which Providence sends to enhance the value of its favours. My orchard was often robbed by school-boys, and my wife's custards plundered by the cats or the children. The Squire would sometimes fall asleep in the most pathetic parts of my sermon, or his lady return my wife's civilities at church with a mutilated courtesy. But we soon got over the uneasiness caused by such accidents, and usually in three or four days began to wonder how they vexed us.

My children, the offspring of temperance, as they were educated without softness, so they were at once well-formed and healthy: my sons hardy and active, my daughters beautiful and blooming. When I stood in the midst of the little circle, which promised to be the supports of my declining age, I could not avoid repeating the famous story of Count Abensberg, who, in Henry the Second's progress through Germany, while other courtiers came with their treasures,

brought his thirty-two children, and presented them to his sovereign as the most valuable offering he had to bestow. In this manner, though I had but six, I considered them as a very valuable present made to my country, and consequently looked upon it as my debtor. Our eldest son was named George, after his uncle, who left us ten thousand pounds. Our second child, a girl, I intended to call after her aunt Grissel; but my wife, who during her pregnancy had been reading romances, insisted upon her being called Olivia. In less than another year we had another daughter, and now I was determined that Grissel should be her name; but a rich relation taking a fancy to stand godmother, the girl was, by her directions, called Sophia; so that we had two romantic names in the family; but I solemnly protest I had no hand in it. Moses was our next, and after an interval of twelve years we had two sons more.

It would be fruitless to deny exultation when I saw my little ones about me; but the vanity and the satisfaction of my wife were even greater than mine. When our visitors would say, "Well, upon my

word, Mrs. Primrose, you have the finest children in the whole country,"—"Ay, neighbour," she would answer, "they are as Heaven made them, handsome enough, if they be good enough; for handsome is, that handsome does." And then she would bid the girls hold up their heads; who, to conceal nothing, were certainly very handsome. Mere outside is so very trifling a circumstance with me, that I should scarcely have remembered to mention it, had it not been a general topic of conversation in the country. Olivia, now about eighteen, had that luxuriancy of beauty, with which painters generally draw Hebe; open, sprightly, and commanding. Sophia's features were not so striking at first, but often did more certain execution; for they were soft, modest, and alluring. The one vanquished by a single blow, the other by efforts successfully repeated.

The temper of a woman is generally formed from the turn of her features; at least it was so with my daughters. Olivia wished for many lovers; Sophia to secure one. Olivia was often affected from too great a desire to please; Sophia even repressed excellence, from her fears to offend. The one entertained me with her vivacity when I was gay, the other with her sense when I was serious. But these qualities were never carried to excess in either, and I have often seen them exchange characters for a whole day together. A suit of mourning has transformed my coquet into a prude, and a new set of ribands has given her younger sister more than natural vivacity. My eldest son, George, was bred at Oxford, as I intended him for one of the learned professions. My second boy, Moses, whom I designed for business, received a sort of miscellaneous education at home. But it is needless to attempt describing the particular characters of young people that had seen but very little of the world. In short, a family likeness prevailed through all, and, properly speaking, they had but one character—that of being all equally generous, credulous, simple, and inoffensive.

CHAPTER II.

FAMILY MISFORTUNES.—THE LOSS OF FORTUNE ONLY SERVES TO INCREASE THE PRIDE OF THE WORTHY.

THE temporal concerns of our family were chiefly committed to my wife's management; as to the spiritual, I took them entirely under my own direction. The profits of my living, which amounted to but thirty-five pounds a year, I made over to the orphans and widows of the clergy of our diocese; for, having a fortune of my own, I was careless of temporalities, and felt a secret pleasure in doing my duty without reward. I also set a resolution of keeping no curate, and of being acquainted with every man in the parish, exhorting the married men to temperance, and the bachelors to matrimony; so that in a few years it was a common saying, that there were three strange wants at Wakefield—a parson wanting pride, young men wanting wives, and alehouses wanting customers.

Matrimony was always one of my favourite topics, and I wrote several sermons to prove its happiness; but there was a peculiar tenet which I made a point of supporting: for I maintained, with Whiston, that it was unlawful for a priest of the Church of England, after the death of his first wife, to take a second; or, to express it in one word, I valued myself upon being a strict monogamist.

I was early initiated into this important dispute, on which so many laborious volumes have been written. I published some tracts upon the subject myself, which, as they never sold, I have the consolation of thinking were read only by the happy *few*. Some of my friends called this my weak side; but, alas! they had not, like me, made it the subject of long contemplation. The more I reflected upon it, the more important it appeared. I even went a step beyond Whiston in displaying my principles: as he had engraven upon his wife's tomb that she was the *only* wife of William Whiston, so I wrote a similar epitaph for my wife, though still living, in which I extolled her prudence, economy, and obedience till death; and having got it copied fair, with an elegant frame, it was placed over the chimney-piece, where it answered several very useful purposes. It admonished my wife of her duty to me, and my fidelity to her; it inspired her with a passion for fame, and constantly put her in mind of her end.

THE EVENING CONCERT.

It was thus, perhaps, from hearing marriage so often recommended, that my eldest son, just upon leaving college, fixed his affections upon the daughter of a neighbouring clergyman, who was a dignitary in the Church, and in circumstances to give her a large fortune; but fortune was her smallest accomplishment. Miss Arabella Wilmot was allowed by all (except my two daughters) to be completely pretty. Her youth, health, and innocence were still heightened by a complexion so transparent, and such a happy sensibility of look, as even age could not gaze on with indifference. As Mr. Wilmot knew that I could make a very handsome settlement on my son, he was not averse to the match; so both families lived together in all that harmony which generally precedes an expected alliance. Being convinced, by experience, that the days of courtship are the most happy of our lives, I was willing enough to lengthen the period; and the various amusements which the young couple every day shared in each other's company seemed to increase their passion. We were generally awaked in the morning by music, and on fine days rode a-hunting. The hours between breakfast and dinner the ladies devoted to dress and study: they usually read a page, and then gazed at themselves in the glass, which even philosophers might own often presented the page of greatest beauty. At dinner my wife took the lead; for, as she always insisted upon carving everything herself, it being her mother's way, she gave us, upon these occasions, the history of every dish. When we had dined, to prevent the ladies leaving us, I generally ordered the table to be removed; and sometimes, with the music-master's assistance, the girls would give us a very agreeable concert. Walking out, drinking tea, country dances, and forfeits, shortened the rest of the day, without the assistance of cards, as I hated all manner of gaming, except backgammon, at which my old friend and I sometimes took a twopenny hit. Nor can I here pass over an ominous circumstance that happened the last time we played together; I only wanted to fling a quatre, and yet I threw deuce ace five times running.

Some months were elapsed in this manner, till at last it was thought convenient to fix a day for the nuptials of the young couple, who seemed earnestly to desire it. During the preparations for the wedding, I need not describe the busy importance of my wife, nor the sly looks of my daughters: in fact, my attention was fixed on another object, the completing a tract which I intended shortly to publish in

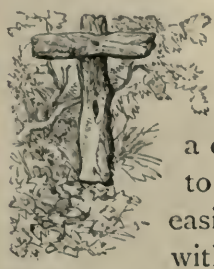
defence of my favourite principle. As I looked upon this as a master-piece, both for argument and style, I could not, in the pride of my heart, avoid showing it to my old friend, Mr. Wilmot, as I made no doubt of receiving his approbation: but not till too late I discovered that he was most violently attached to the contrary opinion, and with good reason; for he was at that time actually courting a fourth wife. This, as may be expected, produced a dispute attended with some acrimony, which threatened to interrupt our intended alliance; but, on the day before that appointed for the ceremony, we agreed to discuss the subject at large.

It was managed with proper spirit on both sides; he asserted that I was heterodox; I retorted the charge: he replied, and I rejoined. In the mean time, while the controversy was hottest, I was called out by one of my relations, who, with a face of concern, advised me to give up the dispute, at least till my son's wedding was over. "How," cried I, "relinquish the cause of truth, and let him be a husband, already driven to the very verge of absurdity? You might as well advise me to give up my fortune as my argument." "Your fortune," returned my friend, "I am now sorry to inform you, is almost nothing. The merchant in town, in whose hands your money was lodged, has gone off to avoid a statute of bankruptcy, and is thought not to have left a shilling in the pound. I was unwilling to shock you or the family with the account till after the wedding; but now it may serve to moderate your warmth in the argument; for I suppose your own prudence will enforce the necessity of dissembling, at least till your son has the young lady's fortune secure." "Well," returned I, "if what you tell me be true, and if I am to be a beggar, it shall never make me a rascal, or induce me to disavow my principles. I'll go this moment, and inform the company of my circumstances: and as for the argument, I even here retract my former concessions in the old gentleman's favour, nor will I allow him now to be a husband in any sense of the expression."

It would be endless to describe the different sensations of both families, when I divulged the news of our misfortune; but what others felt was slight to what the lovers appeared to endure. Mr. Wilmot, who seemed before sufficiently inclined to break off the match, was by this blow soon determined; one virtue he had in perfection, which was prudence, too often the only one that is left us at seventy-two.

CHAPTER III.

A MIGRATION.—THE FORTUNATE CIRCUMSTANCES OF OUR LIVES ARE GENERALLY FOUND AT LAST TO BE OF OUR OWN PROCURING.



THE only hope of our family now was, that the report of our misfortune might be malicious or premature: but a letter from my agent in town soon came with a confirmation of every particular. The loss of fortune to myself alone would have been trifling: the only uneasiness I felt was for my family, who were to be humble without an education to render them callous to contempt.

Near a fortnight had passed before I attempted to restrain their affliction; for premature consolation is but the remembrancer of sorrow. During this interval, my thoughts were employed on some future means of supporting them; and at last a small cure of fifteen pounds a year was offered me in a distant neighbourhood, where I could still enjoy my principles without molestation. With this proposal I joyfully closed, having determined to increase my salary by managing a little farm.

Having taken this resolution, my next care was to get together the wrecks of my fortune; and, all debts collected and paid, out of fourteen thousand pounds we had but four hundred remaining. My chief attention, therefore, was now to bring down the pride of my family to their circumstances; for I well knew that aspiring beggary is wretchedness itself. "You cannot be ignorant, my children," cried I, "that no prudence of ours could have prevented our late misfortune; but prudence may do much in disappointing its effects. We are now poor, my fondlings, and wisdom bids us conform to our humble situation. Let us, then, without repining, give up those splendours with which numbers are wretched, and seek in humbler circumstances that peace with which all may be happy. The poor live pleasantly without our help; why, then, should not we learn to live without theirs? No, my children, let us from this moment give up all pretensions to gentility; we have still enough left for happiness if we are wise, and let us draw upon content for the deficiencies of fortune."

As my eldest son was bred a scholar, I determined to send him to town, where his abilities might contribute to our support and his own

PREPARATIONS FOR THE WEDDING.

GEORGE LEAVING HOME

The separation of friends and families is, perhaps, one of the most distressful circumstances attendant on penury. The day soon arrived on which we were to disperse for the first time. My son, after taking leave of his mother and the rest, who mingled their tears with their kisses, came to ask a blessing from me. This I gave him from my heart, and which, added to five guineas, was all the patrimony I had now to bestow. "You are going, my boy," cried I, "to London on foot, in the manner Hooker, your great ancestor, travelled there before you. Take from me the same horse that was given him by the good bishop Jewel, this staff, and take this book, too, it will be your comfort on the way; these two lines in it are worth a million—*I have been young, and now am old; yet never saw I the righteous man forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread.* Let this be your consolation as you travel on. Go, my boy, whatever be thy fortune, let me see thee once a-year; still keep a good heart, and farewell." As he was possessed of integrity and honour, I was under no apprehensions from throwing him naked into the amphitheatre of life; for I knew he would act a good part, whether vanquished or victorious.

His departure only prepared the way for our own, which arrived a few days afterwards. The leaving a neighbourhood in which we had enjoyed so many hours of tranquillity, was not without a tear, which scarce fortitude itself could suppress. Besides, a journey of seventy miles, to a family that had hitherto never been above ten from home, filled us with apprehension; and the cries of the poor, who followed us for some miles, contributed to increase it. The first day's journey brought us in safety within thirty miles of our future retreat, and we put up for the night at an obscure inn in a village by the way. When we were shown a room, I desired the landlord, in my usual way, to let us have his company, with which he complied, as what he drank would increase the bill next morning. He knew, however, the whole neighbourhood to which I was removing, particularly Squire Thornhill, who was to be my landlord, and who lived within a few miles of the place. This gentleman he described as one who desired to know little more of the world than its pleasures, being particularly remarkable for his attachment to the fair sex. He observed, that no virtue was able to resist his arts and assiduity, and that scarce a farmer's daughter within ten miles round, but what had found him successful and faithless. Though this account gave me some pain, it had a very different effect upon my daughters, whose features seemed to brighten with the expectation of an approaching triumph; nor was my wife less pleased and confident of their allurements and virtue. While our thoughts were thus employed, the hostess entered the room to inform her husband that the strange gentleman, who had been two days in the house, wanted money, and could not satisfy them for his reckoning. "Want money!" replied the host, "that must be impossible; for it was no later than yesterday he paid three guineas to our beadle to spare an old broken soldier that was to be whipped through the town for dog-stealing." The hostess, however, still persisting in her first assertion, he was preparing to leave the room, swearing that he would be satisfied one way or another, when I begged the landlord would introduce me to a stranger of so much charity as he described. With this he complied, showing in a gentleman who seemed to be about thirty, dressed in clothes that once were laced. His person was well-formed, and his face marked with the lines of thinking. He had something short and dry in his address, and seemed not to understand ceremony, or to despise it. Upon the landlord's leaving the room, I could not avoid expressing my concern

to the stranger, at seeing a gentleman in such circumstances, and offered him my purse to satisfy the present demand. "I take it with all my heart, sir," replied he, "and am glad that a late oversight, in giving what money I had about me, has shown me that there are still some men like you. I must, however, previously entreat being informed of the name and residence of my benefactor, in order to repay him as soon as possible." In this I satisfied him fully, not only mentioning my name and late misfortunes, but the place to which I was going to remove. "This," cried he, "happens still more luckily than I hoped for, as I am going the same way myself, having been detained here two days by the floods, which I hope, by to-morrow, will be found passable." I testified the pleasure I should have in his company, and my wife and daughters joining in entreaty, he was prevailed upon to stay supper. The stranger's conversation, which was at once pleasing and instructive, induced me to wish for a continuance of it; but it was now high time to retire and take refreshment against the fatigues of the following day.

The next morning we all set forward together: my family on horseback, while Mr. Burchell, our new companion, walked along the foot-path by the road side, observing, with a smile, that as we were ill-mounted, he would be too generous to attempt leaving us behind. As the floods were not yet subsided, we were obliged to hire a guide, who trotted on before, Mr. Burchell and I bringing up the rear. We lightened the fatigues of the road with philosophical disputes, which he seemed to understand perfectly. But what surprised me most was, that though he was a money-borrower, he defended his opinions with as much obstinacy as if he had been my patron. He now and then also informed me to whom the different seats belonged that lay in our view as we travelled the road. "That," cried he, pointing to a very magnificent house which stood at some distance, "belongs to Mr. Thornhill, a young gentleman who enjoys a large fortune, though entirely dependent on the will of his uncle, Sir William Thornhill, a gentleman who, content with a little himself, permits his nephew to enjoy the rest, and chiefly resides in town." "What!" cried I, "is my young landlord then the nephew of a man whose virtues, generosity, and singularities are so universally known? I have heard Sir William Thornhill represented as one of the most generous, yet whimsical men in the kingdom; a man of consummate benevolence."—"Something, perhaps, too much so," replied Mr. Burchell; "at least, he carried

benevolence to an excess when young, for his passions were then strong, and as they were all upon the side of virtue, they led it up to a romantic extreme. He early began to aim at the qualifications of the soldier and scholar; was soon distinguished in the army, and had some reputation among men of learning. Adulation ever follows the ambitious; for such alone receive most pleasure from flattery. He was surrounded with crowds, who showed him only one side of their character; so that he began to lose a regard for private interest in universal sympathy. He loved all mankind; for fortune prevented him from knowing that there were rascals. Physicians tell us of a disorder in which the whole body is so exquisitely sensible, that the slightest touch gives pain: what some have thus suffered in their persons, this gentleman felt in his mind. The slightest distress, whether real or fictitious, touched him to the quick, and his soul laboured under a sickly sensibility of the miseries of others. Thus disposed to relieve, it will be easily conjectured he found numbers disposed to solicit: his profusions began to impair his fortune, but not his good nature; that, indeed, was seen to increase as the other seemed to decay; he grew improvident as he grew poor; and though he talked like a man of sense, his actions were those of a fool. Still, however, being surrounded with importunity, and no longer able to satisfy every request that was made him, instead of *money* he gave *promises*. They were all he had to bestow, and he had not resolution enough to give any man pain by a denial. By this he drew round him crowds of dependants, whom he was sure to disappoint, yet wished to relieve. These hung upon him for a time, and left him with merited reproaches and contempt. But in proportion as he became contemptible to others, he became despicable to himself. His mind had leaned upon their adulation, and, that support taken away, he could find no pleasure in the applause of his heart, which he had never learned to reverence. The world now began to wear a different aspect; the flattery of his friends began to dwindle into simple approbation. Approbation soon took the more friendly form of advice; and advice, when rejected, produced their reproaches. He now, therefore, found that such friends as benefits had gathered round him, were little estimable; he now found that a man's own heart must be ever given to gain that of another. He now found, that—that—I forget what I was going to observe; in short, sir, he resolved to respect himself, and laid down a plan of restoring his falling fortune.

Mr BURCHELL RESCUES SOPHIA.

For this purpose, in his own whimsical manner, he travelled through Europe on foot, and now, though he has scarce attained the age of thirty, his circumstances are more affluent than ever. At present his bounties are more rational and moderate than before; but still he preserves the character of an humourist, and finds most pleasure in eccentric virtues."

My attention was so much taken up by Mr. Burchell's account, that I scarcely looked forward as we went along, till we were alarmed by the cries of my family, when, turning, I perceived my youngest daughter in the midst of a rapid stream, thrown from her horse, and struggling with the torrent. She had sunk twice, nor was it in my power to disengage myself in time to bring her relief. My sensations were even too violent to permit my attempting her rescue: she must have certainly perished, had not my companion, perceiving her danger, instantly plunged in to her relief, and, with some difficulty, brought her in safety to the opposite shore. By taking the current a little farther up, the rest of the family got safely over; where we had an opportunity of joining our acknowledgments to hers. Her gratitude may be more readily imagined than described: she thanked her deliverer more with looks than words, and continued to lean upon his arm, as if still willing to receive assistance. My wife also hoped one day to have the pleasure of returning his kindness at her own house. Thus, after we were refreshed at the next inn, and had dined together, as Mr. Burchell was going to a different part of the country, he took leave; and we pursued our journey, my wife observing as he went, that she liked him extremely, and protesting that, if he had birth and fortune to entitle him to match into such a family as ours, she knew no man she would sooner fix upon. I could not but smile to hear her talk in this lofty strain; but I was never much displeased with those harmless delusions that tend to make us more happy.

CHAPTER IV.

A PROOF THAT EVEN THE HUMBLEST FORTUNE MAY GRANT HAPPINESS, WHICH DEPENDS NOT ON CIRCUMSTANCES BUT CONSTITUTION.

THE place of our retreat was in a little neighbourhood, consisting of farmers, who tilled their own grounds, and were equal strangers to opulence and poverty. As they had almost all the conveniences of life within themselves, they seldom visited towns or cities in search of superfluity. Remote from the polite, they still retained the primæval simplicity of manners; and, frugal by habit, they scarce knew that temperance was a virtue. They wrought with cheerfulness on days of labour, but observed festivals as intervals of idleness and pleasure. They kept up the Christmas carol, sent true love-knots on Valentine morning, ate pancakes on Shrove-tide, showed their wit on the first of April, and religiously cracked nuts on Michaelmas eve. Being apprised of our approach, the whole neighbourhood came out to meet their minister, drest in their finest clothes, and preceded by a pipe and tabor; a feast also was provided for our reception, at which we sate cheerfully down; and what the conversation wanted in wit was made up in laughter.

Our little habitation was situated at the foot of a sloping hill, sheltered with a beautiful underwood behind, and a prattling river before; on one side a meadow, on the other a green. My farm consisted of about twenty acres of excellent land, having given a hundred pound for my predecessor's good-will. Nothing could exceed the neatness of my little enclosures, the elms and hedge-rows appearing with inexpressible beauty. My house consisted of but one story, and was covered with thatch, which gave it an air of great snugness; the walls on the inside were nicely whitewashed, and my daughters undertook to adorn them with pictures of their own designing. Though the same room served us for parlour and kitchen, that only made it the warmer. Besides, as it was kept with the utmost neatness, the dishes, plates, and coppers being well scoured, and all disposed in bright rows on the shelves, the eye was agreeably relieved, and did not want richer furniture. There were three other apartments—one for my wife and me, another for our two daughters, within our own, and the third, with two beds, for the rest of the children.

The little republic to which I gave laws was regulated in the following manner: by sun-rise we all assembled in our common apartment, the fire being previously kindled by the servant. After we had saluted each other with proper ceremony, for I always thought fit to keep up some mechanical forms of good breeding, without which freedom ever destroys friendship, we all bent in gratitude to that Being who gave us another day. This duty being performed, my son and I went to pursue our usual industry abroad, while my wife and daughters employed themselves in providing breakfast, which was always ready at a certain time. I allowed half an hour for this meal, and an hour for dinner; which time was taken up in innocent mirth between my wife and daughters, and in philosophical arguments between my son and me.

As we rose with the sun, so we never pursued our labours after it was gone down, but returned home to the expecting family, where smiling looks, a neat hearth, and pleasant fire, were prepared for our reception. Nor were we without guests; sometimes Farmer Flamborough, our talkative neighbour, and often the blind piper, would pay us a visit, and taste our gooseberry wine; for the making of which we had lost neither the receipt nor the reputation. These harmless people had several ways of being good company; while one played, the other would sing some soothing ballad, Johnny Armstrong's Last Good-night, or the Cruelty of Barbara Allen. The night was concluded in the manner we began the morning, my youngest boys being appointed to read the lessons of the day; and he that read loudest, distinctest, and best, was to have an halfpenny on Sunday to put into the poor's box.

When Sunday came, it was indeed a day of finery, which all my sumptuary edicts could not restrain. How well soever I fancied my lectures against pride had conquered the vanity of my daughters, yet I still found them secretly attached to all their former finery; they still loved laces, ribands, bugles, and catgut; my wife herself retained a passion for her crimson paduasoy, because I formerly happened to say it became her.

The first Sunday, in particular, their behaviour served to mortify me. I had desired my girls the preceding night to be drest early the next day; for I always loved to be at church a good while before the rest of the congregation. They punctually obeyed my directions; but, when we were to assemble in the morning at breakfast, down

came my wife and daughters, drest out in all their former splendour: their hair plastered up with pomatum, their faces patched to taste, their trains bundled up in an heap behind, and rustling at every motion. I could not help smiling at their vanity, particularly that of my wife, from whom I expected more discretion. In this exigence, therefore, my only resource was to order my son, with an important air, to call our coach. The girls were amazed at the command; but I repeated it with more solemnity than before "Surely, my dear, you jest," cried my wife; "we can walk it perfectly well: we want no coach to carry us now."—"You mistake, child," returned I, "we do want a coach; for if we walk to church in this trim, the very children in the parish will hoot after us."—"Indeed," replied my wife, "I always imagined that my Charles was fond of seeing his children neat and handsome about him."—"You may be as neat as you please," interrupted I, "and I shall love you the better for it; but all this is not neatness, but frippery. These rufflings, and pinkings, and patchings, will only make us hated by all the wives of our neighbours. No, my

children," continued I, more gravely, "those gowns may be altered into something of a plainer cut; for finery is very unbecoming in us, who want the means of decency. I do not know whether such flouncing and shredding is becoming even in the rich, if we consider, upon a moderate calculation, that the nakedness of the indigent world may be clothed from the trimmings of the vain."

This remonstrance had the proper effect; they went with great composure, that very instant, to change their dress; and the next day I had the satisfaction of finding my daughters, at their own request, employed in cutting up their trains into Sunday waistcoats for Dick and Bill, the two little ones; and, what was still more satisfactory, the gowns seemed improved by this curtailing.

CHAPTER V.

A NEW AND GREAT ACQUAINTANCE INTRODUCED.—WHAT WE PLACE MOST HOPES UPON, GENERALLY PROVES MOST FATAL.

AT a small distance from the house, my predecessor had made a seat overshaded by a hedge of hawthorn and honeysuckle. Here, when the weather was fine, and our labour soon finished, we usually sat together to enjoy an extensive landscape in the calm of the evening. Here, too, we drank tea, which was now become an occasional banquet; and, as we had it but seldom, it diffused a new joy, the preparations for it being made with no small share of bustle and ceremony. On these occasions our two little ones always read for us, and they were regularly served after we had done. Sometimes, to give a variety to our amusements, the girls sung to the guitar; and, while they thus formed a little concert, my wife and I would stroll down the sloping field, that was embellished with blue-bells and centaury, talk of our children with rapture, and enjoy the breeze that wafted both health and harmony.

In this manner we began to find that every situation in life may bring its own peculiar pleasures; every morning waked us to a repetition of toil; but the evening repaid it with vacant hilarity.

It was about the beginning of autumn, on a holiday, for I kept such

as intervals of relaxation from labour, that I had drawn out my family to our usual place of amusement, and our young musicians began their usual concert. As we were thus engaged, we saw a stag bound nimbly by, within about twenty paces of where we were sitting, and, by its panting, it seemed pressed by the hunters. We had not much time to reflect upon the poor animal's distress, when we perceived the dogs and horsemen come sweeping along at some distance behind, and making the very path it had taken. I was instantly for returning in with my family; but either curiosity or surprise, or some more hidden motive, held my wife and daughters to their seats. The huntsman, who rode foremost, passed us with great swiftness, followed by four or five persons more, who seemed in equal haste. At last a young gentleman, of a more genteel appearance than the rest, came forward, and for a while regarding us, instead of pursuing the chase, stopped short, and, giving his horse to a servant who attended, approached us with a careless superior air. He seemed to want no introduction, but was going to salute my daughters as one certain of a kind reception; but they had early learned the lesson of looking presumption out of countenance. Upon which he let us know that his name was Thornhill, and that he was the owner of the estate that lay for some extent round us. He again, therefore, offered to salute the female part of the family; and such was the power of fortune and fine clothes, that he found no second repulse. As his address, though confident, was easy, we soon became more familiar; and, perceiving musical instruments lying near, he begged to be favoured with a song. As I did not approve of such disproportioned acquaintances, I winked upon my daughters, in order to prevent their compliance; but my hint was counteracted by one from their mother, so that with a cheerful air they gave us a favourite song of Dryden's. Mr. Thornhill seemed highly delighted with their performance and choice, and then took up the guitar himself. He played but very indifferently; however, my eldest daughter repaid his former applause with interest, and assured him that his tones were louder than even those of her master. At this compliment he bowed, which she returned with a courtsy. He praised her taste, and she commended his understanding: an age could not have made them better acquainted; while the fond mother too, equally happy, insisted upon her landlord's stepping in, and taking a glass of her gooseberry. The whole family seemed earnest to please him; my girls attempted to entertain him with topics they thought most modern;

while Moses, on the contrary, gave him a question or two from the ancients, for which he had the satisfaction of being laughed at; my little ones were no less busy, and fondly stuck close to the stranger. All my endeavours could scarcely keep their dirty fingers from handling and tarnishing the lace on his clothes, and lifting up the flaps of his pocket-holes, to see what was there. At the approach of evening he took leave; but not till he had requested permission to renew his visit, which, as he was our landlord, we most readily agreed to.

As soon as he was gone, my wife called a council on the conduct of the day. She was of opinion, that it was a most fortunate hit; for that she had known even stranger things than that brought to bear. She hoped again to see the day in which we might hold up our heads with the best of them; and concluded, she protested she could see no reason why the two Miss Wrinklers should marry great fortunes, and her children get none. As this last argument was directed to me, I protested I could see no reason for it neither; nor why Mr. Simkins got the ten thousand pound prize in the lottery, and we sate down with a blank. "I protest, Charles," cried my wife, "this is the way you always damp my girls and me when we are in spirits. Tell me, Sophy, my dear, what do you think of our new visitor? Don't you think he seemed to be good-natured?"—"Immensely so, indeed, mamma," replied she; "I think he has a great deal to say upon everything, and is never at a loss; and the more trifling the subject, the more he has to say."—"Yes," cried Olivia, "he is well enough for a man; but, for my part, I don't much like him, he is so extremely impudent and familiar; but on the guitar he is shocking." These two last speeches I interpreted by contraries. I found by this, that Sophia internally despised, as much as Olivia secretly admired him. "Whatever may be your opinions of him, my children," cried I, "to confess the truth, he has not prepossessed me in his favour. Disproportioned friendships ever terminate in disgust; and I thought, notwithstanding all his ease, that he seemed perfectly sensible of the distance between us. Let us keep to companions of our own rank. There is no character more contemptible than a man that is a fortune-hunter; and I can see no reason why fortune-hunting women should not be contemptible too. Thus, at best, we shall be contemptible if his views are honourable; but if they be otherwise!—I should shudder but to think of that! It is true, I have no apprehensions from the conduct of my children, but I think there are some from his character." I would have proceeded,

THE SQUIRE INTRODUCES HIMSELF.

but for the interruption of a servant from the Squire, who, with his compliments, sent us a side of venison, and a promise to dine with us some days after. This well-timed present pleaded more powerfully in his favour than anything I had to say could obviate. I therefore continued silent, satisfied with just having pointed out danger, and leaving it to their own discretion to avoid it. That virtue which requires to be ever guarded is scarcely worth the sentinel.

CHAPTER VI.

THE HAPPINESS OF A COUNTRY FIRE-SIDE.

AS we carried on the former dispute with some degree of warmth, in order to accommodate matters, it was universally agreed, that we should have a part of the venison for supper, and the girls undertook the task with alacrity. "I am sorry," cried I, "that we have no neighbour or stranger to take a part in this good cheer: feasts of this kind acquire a double relish from hospitality."—"Bless me!" cried my wife, "here comes our good friend Mr. Burchell, that saved our Sophia, and that run you down fairly in the argument."—"Confute me in argument, child!" cried I. "You mistake there, my dear; I believe there are but few that can do that: I never dispute your abilities at making a goose-pie, and I beg you'll leave argument to me." As I spoke, poor Mr. Burchell entered the house, and was welcomed by the family, who shook him heartily by the hand, while little Dick officiously reached him a chair.

I was pleased with the poor man's friendship for two reasons: because I knew that he wanted mine, and I knew him to be friendly as far as he was able. He was known in our neighbourhood by the character of the poor Gentleman that would do no good when he was young, though he was not yet thirty. He would at intervals talk with great good sense; but in general he was fondest of the company of children, whom he used to call harmless little men. He was famous, I found, for singing them ballads, and telling them stories; and seldom went out without something in his pockets for them—a piece of gingerbread, or an halfpenny whistle. He generally came for

a few days into our neighbourhood once a year, and lived upon the neighbours' hospitality. He sate down to supper among us, and my wife was not sparing of her gooseberry wine. The tale went round; he sung us old songs, and gave the children the story of the Buck of Beverland, with the History of Patient Grissel, the Adventures of Catskin, and then Fair Rosamond's Bower. Our cock, which always crew at eleven, now told us it was time for repose; but an unforeseen difficulty started about lodging the stranger: all our beds were already taken up, and it was too late to send him to the next ale-house. In this dilemma, little Dick offered him his part of the bed, if his brother Moses would let him lie with him. "And I," cried Bill, "will give Mr. Burchell my part, if my sisters will take me to theirs."—"Well done, my good children," cried I, "hospitality is one of the first Christian duties. The beast retires to its shelter, and the bird flies to its nest; but helpless man can only find refuge from his fellow-creature. The greatest stranger in this world was he that came to save it. He never had a house, as if willing to see what hospitality was left remaining among us.—Deborah, my dear," cried I to my wife, "give those boys a lump of sugar each; and let Dick's be the largest, because he spoke first."

In the morning early, I called out my whole family to help at saving an after-growth of hay, and our guest offering his assistance he was accepted among the number. Our labours went on lightly; we turned the swath to the wind; I went foremost, and the rest followed in due succession. I could not avoid, however, observing the assiduity of Mr. Burchell in assisting my daughter Sophia in her part of the task. When he had finished his own, he would join in hers, and enter into a close conversation: but I had too good an opinion of Sophia's understanding, and was too well convinced of her ambition, to be under any uneasiness from a man of broken fortune. When we were finished for the day, Mr. Burchell was invited as on the night before, but he refused, as he was to lie that night at a neighbour's, to whose child he was carrying a whistle. When gone, our conversation at supper turned upon our late unfortunate guest. "What a strong instance," said I, "is that poor man of the miseries attending a youth of levity and extravagance! He by no means wants sense, which only serves to aggravate his former folly. Poor forlorn creature! where are now the revellers, the flatterers, that he could once inspire and command? Gone, perhaps, to attend the bagnio pander, grown rich by his ex-

travagance. They once praised him, and now they applaud the pander: their former raptures at his wit are now converted into sarcasms at his folly; he is poor, and perhaps deserves poverty; for he has neither the ambition to be independent, nor the skill to be useful." Prompted perhaps by some secret reasons, I delivered this observation with too much acrimony, which my Sophia gently reproved. "Whatsoever his former conduct may have been, papa, his circumstances should exempt him from censure now. His present indigence is a sufficient punishment for former folly: and I have heard my papa himself say, that we should never strike one unnecessary blow at a victim over whom Providence holds the scourge of its resentment."—"You are right, Sophy," cried my son Moses; "and one of the ancients finely represents so malicious a conduct, by the attempts of a rustic to flay Marsyas, whose skin, the fable tells us, had been wholly stripped off by another; besides, I don't know if this poor man's situation be so bad as my father would represent it. We are not to judge of the feelings of others by what we might feel if in their

THE VICAR STIRRING THE FIRE

place. However dark the habitation of the mole to our eyes, yet the animal itself finds the apartment sufficiently lightsome. And, to confess a truth, this man's mind seems fitted to his station; for I never heard any one more sprightly than he was to-day, when he conversed with you." This was said without the least design: however, it excited a blush, which she strove to cover by an affected laugh; assuring him that she scarcely took any notice of what he said to her, but that she believed he might once have been a very fine gentleman. The readiness with which she undertook to vindicate herself, and her blushing, were symptoms I did not internally approve; but I repressed my suspicions.

As we expected our landlord the next day, my wife went to make the venison pasty; Moses sate reading, while I taught the little ones; my daughters seemed equally busy with the rest; and I observed them for a good while cooking something over the fire. I at first supposed they were assisting their mother; but little Dick informed me, in a whisper, that they were making a *wash* for the face. Washes of all kinds I had a natural antipathy to; for I knew that, instead of mending the complexion, they spoiled it. I therefore approached my chair by slow degrees to the fire, and grasping the poker, as if it wanted mending, seemingly by accident, overturned the whole composition, and it was too late to begin another.

CHAPTER VII.

A TOWN WIT DESCRIBED.—THE DULLEST FELLOWS MAY LEARN TO BE COMICAL FOR A NIGHT OR TWO.

WHEN the morning arrived on which we were to entertain our young landlord, it may be easily supposed what provisions were exhausted to make an appearance. It may be also conjectured, that my wife and daughters expanded their gayest plumage on this occasion. Mr. Thornhill came with a couple of friends, his chaplain, and feeder. The servants, who were numerous, he politely ordered to the next alehouse: but my wife, in the triumph of her heart, insisted on entertaining them all; for which, by-the-bye, our

family was pinched for three weeks after. As Mr. Burchell had hinted to us, the day before, that he was making some proposals of marriage to Miss Wilmot, my son George's former mistress, this a good deal damped the heartiness of his reception: but accident, in some measure, relieved our embarrassment; for one of the company happening to mention her name, Mr. Thornhill observed, with an oath, that he never knew anything more absurd than calling such a fright a beauty: "For, strike me ugly," continued he, "if I should not find as much pleasure in choosing my mistress by the information of a lamp under the clock of St. Dunstan's." At this he laughed, and so did we: the jests of the rich are ever successful. Olivia, too, could not avoid whispering, loud enough to be heard, that he had an infinite fund of humour.

After dinner I began with my usual toast, the Church; for this I was thanked by the chaplain, as he said the Church was the only mistress of his affections. "Come, tell us honestly, Frank," said the Squire, with his usual archness, "suppose the Church, your present mistress, dressed in lawn sleeves, on one hand, and Miss Sophia, with no lawn about her, on the other, which would you be for?"—"For both, to be sure," cried the chaplain.—"Right, Frank," cried the Squire: "for may this glass suffocate me, but a fine girl is worth all the priestcraft in the creation; for what are tithes and tricks but an imposition, all a confounded imposture? and I can prove it."—"I wish you would," cried my son Moses; "and I think," continued he, "that I should be able to answer you."—"Very well, sir," cried the Squire, who immediately smoaked him, and winking on the rest of the company to prepare us for the sport; "if you are for a cool argument upon that subject, I am ready to accept the challenge. And first, whether are you for managing it analogically or dialogically?"—"I am for managing it rationally," cried Moses, quite happy at being permitted to dispute.—"Good again," cried the Squire: "and firstly, of the first, I hope you'll not deny that whatever is, is: if you don't grant me that, I can go no further."—"Why," returned Moses, "I think I may grant that, and make the best of it."—"I hope, too," returned the other, "you will grant that a part is less than the whole."—"I grant that too," cried Moses: "it is but just and reasonable."—"I hope," cried the Squire, "you will not deny that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right ones."—"Nothing can be plainer," returned t'other, and looked round with his usual importance.—"Very well," cried the Squire, speaking very quick; "the premises being thus settled, I proceed to

observe, that the concatenation of self-existence, proceeding in a reciprocal duplicate ratio, naturally produce a problematical dialogism, which, in some measure, proves that the essence of spirituality may be referred to the second predicable."—"Hold, hold," cried the other, "I deny that. Do you think I can thus tamely submit to such heterodox doctrines?"—"What," replied the Squire, as if in a passion, "not submit! Answer me one plain question. Do you think Aristotle right when he says, that relatives are related?"—"Undoubtedly," replied the other.—"If so, then," cried the Squire, "answer me directly to what I propose: Whether do you judge the analytical investigation of the first part of my enthymem deficient secundum quoad, or quoad minus? and give me your reasons, give me your reasons, I say, directly."—"I protest," cried Moses, "I don't rightly comprehend the force of your reasoning; but if it be reduced to one single proposition, I fancy it may then have an answer."—"O, sir," cried the Squire, "I am your most humble servant; I find you want me to furnish you with argument and intellects too. No, sir! there, I protest, you are too hard for me." This effectually raised the laugh against poor Moses, who sate the only dismal figure in a group of merry faces; nor did he offer a single syllable more during the whole entertainment.

But though all this gave me no pleasure, it had a very different effect upon Olivia, who mistook it for humour, though but a mere act of the memory. She thought him, therefore, a very fine gentleman; and such as consider what powerful ingredients a good figure, fine clothes, and fortune, are in that character, will easily forgive her. Mr. Thornhill, notwithstanding his real ignorance, talked with ease, and could expatiate upon the common topics of conversation with fluency. It is not surprising, then, that such talents should win the affections of a girl, who, by education, was taught to value an appearance in herself, and, consequently, to set a value upon it in another.

Upon his departure, we again entered into a debate upon the merits of our young landlord. As he directed his looks and conversation to Olivia, it was no longer doubted but that she was the object that induced him to be our visitor. Nor did she seem to be much displeased at the innocent raillery of her brother and sister upon this occasion. Even Deborah herself seemed to share the glory of the day, and exulted in her daughter's victory, as if it were her own. "And now, my dear," cried she to me, "I'll fairly own that it was I that instructed my girls to encourage our landlord's addresses. I had

always some ambition, and you now see that I was right; for who knows how this may end?"—"Aye, who knows that, indeed!" answered I, with a groan; "for my part, I don't much like it; and I could have been better pleased with one that was poor and honest, than this fine gentleman with his fortune and infidelity; for, depend on't, if he be what I suspect him, no freethinker shall ever have a child of mine."

"Sure, father," cried Moses, "you are too severe in this; for Heaven will never arraign him for what he thinks, but for what he does. Every man has a thousand vicious thoughts, which arise without his power to suppress. Thinking freely of religion may be involuntary with this gentleman; so that, allowing his sentiments to be wrong, yet, as he is purely passive in his assent, he is no more to be blamed for his errors, than the governor of a city without walls for the shelter he is obliged to afford an invading enemy."

"True, my son," cried I; "but if the governor invites the enemy there, he is justly culpable; and such is always the case with those who embrace error. The vice does not lie in assenting to the proofs they see, but in being blind to many of the proofs that offer. So that, though our erroneous opinions be involuntary when formed, yet, as we have been wilfully corrupt, or very negligent in forming them, we deserve punishment for our vice, or contempt for our folly."

My wife now kept up the conversation, though not the argument. She observed that several very prudent men of our acquaintance were freethinkers, and made very good husbands; and she knew some sensible girls that had had skill enough to make converts of their spouses. "And who knows, my dear," continued she, "what Olivia may be able to do? The girl has a great deal to say upon every subject, and, to my knowledge, is very well skilled in controversy."

"Why, my dear, what controversy can she have read?" cried I. "It does not occur to me that I ever put such books into her hands; you certainly over-rate her merit."—"Indeed, papa," replied Olivia, "she does not; I have read a great deal of controversy. I have read the disputes between Thwackum and Square; the controversy between Robinson Crusoe and Friday, the savage; and I am now employed in reading the controversy in Religious Courtship."—"Very well," cried I, "that's a good girl. I find you are perfectly qualified for making converts, and so go help your mother to make the gooseberry-pie."

CHAPTER VIII.

AN AMOUR, WHICH PROMISES LITTLE GOOD FORTUNE, YET MAY BE PRODUCTIVE OF MUCH.

THE next morning we were again visited by Mr. Burchell, though I began, for certain reasons, to be displeased with the frequency of his return; but I could not refuse him my company and fire-side. It is true, his labour more than requited his entertainment; for he wrought among us with vigour, and, either in the meadow or at the hay-rick, put himself foremost. Besides, he had always something amusing to say that lessened our toil, and was at once so out of the way, and yet so sensible, that I loved, laughed at, and pitied him. My only dislike arose from an attachment he discovered to my daughter. He would, in a jesting manner, call her his little mistress, and when he bought each of the girls a set of ribands, hers was the finest. I knew not how, but he every day seemed to become more amiable, his wit to improve, and his simplicity to assume the superior airs of wisdom.

Our family dined in the field, and we sat, or rather reclined, round a temperate repast, our cloth spread upon the hay, while Mr. Burchell gave cheerfulness to the feast. To heighten our satisfaction, two blackbirds answered each other from opposite hedges, the familiar red-breast came and pecked the crumbs from our hands, and every sound seemed but the echo of tranquillity. "I never sit thus," says Sophia, "but I think of the two lovers, so sweetly described by Mr. Gay, who were struck dead in each other's arms. There is something so pathetic in the description, that I have read it an hundred times with new rapture."—"In my opinion," cried my son, "the finest strokes in that description are much below those in the 'Acis and Galatea' of Ovid. The Roman poet understands the use of *contrast* better, and upon that figure, artfully managed, all strength in the pathetic depends."—"It is remarkable," cried Mr. Burchell, "that both the poets you mention have equally contributed to introduce a false taste into their respective countries, by loading all their lines with epithet. Men of little genius found them most easily imitated in their defects; and English poetry, like that in the latter empire of Rome, is nothing at present but a combination of luxuriant images, without plot or connection; a string of

epithets, that improve the sound without carrying on the sense. But, perhaps, madam, while I thus reprehend others, you'll think it just that I should give them an opportunity to retaliate; and, indeed, I have made this remark only to have an opportunity of introducing to the company a ballad, which, whatever be its other defects, is, I think, at least free from those I have mentioned."

A BALLAD.

"TURN, gentle Hermit of the Dale,
And guide my lonely way,
To where yon taper cheers the vale
With hospitable ray.

"For here forlorn and lost I tread,
With fainting steps and slow;
Where wilds, immeasurably spread,
Seem lengthening as I go."

"Forbear, my son," the hermit cries,
"To tempt the dangerous gloom;
For yonder faithless phantom flies
To lure thee to thy doom.

"Here to the houseless child of want
My door is open still;
And though my portion is but scant,
I give it with good will.

"Then turn to-night, and freely share
Whate'er my cell bestows;
My rushy couch and frugal fare,
My blessing and repose.

"No flocks that range the valley free,
To slaughter I condemn;
Taught by that Power that pities me,
I learn to pity them.

"But from the mountain's grassy side
A guiltless feast I bring;
A scrip with herbs and fruit supply'd,
And water from the spring.

"Then, pilgrim, turn, thy cares forego:
All earth-born cares are wrong;
Man wants but little here below,
Nor wants that little long."

Soft as the dew from Heav'n descends,
His gentle accents fell;
The modest stranger lowly bends,
And follows to the cell.

Far in a wilderness obscure,
The lonely mansion lay;
A refuge to the neighbouring poor,
And strangers led astray.

No stores beneath its humble thatch
Requir'd a master's care;
The wicket, opening with a latch,
Receiv'd the harmless pair.

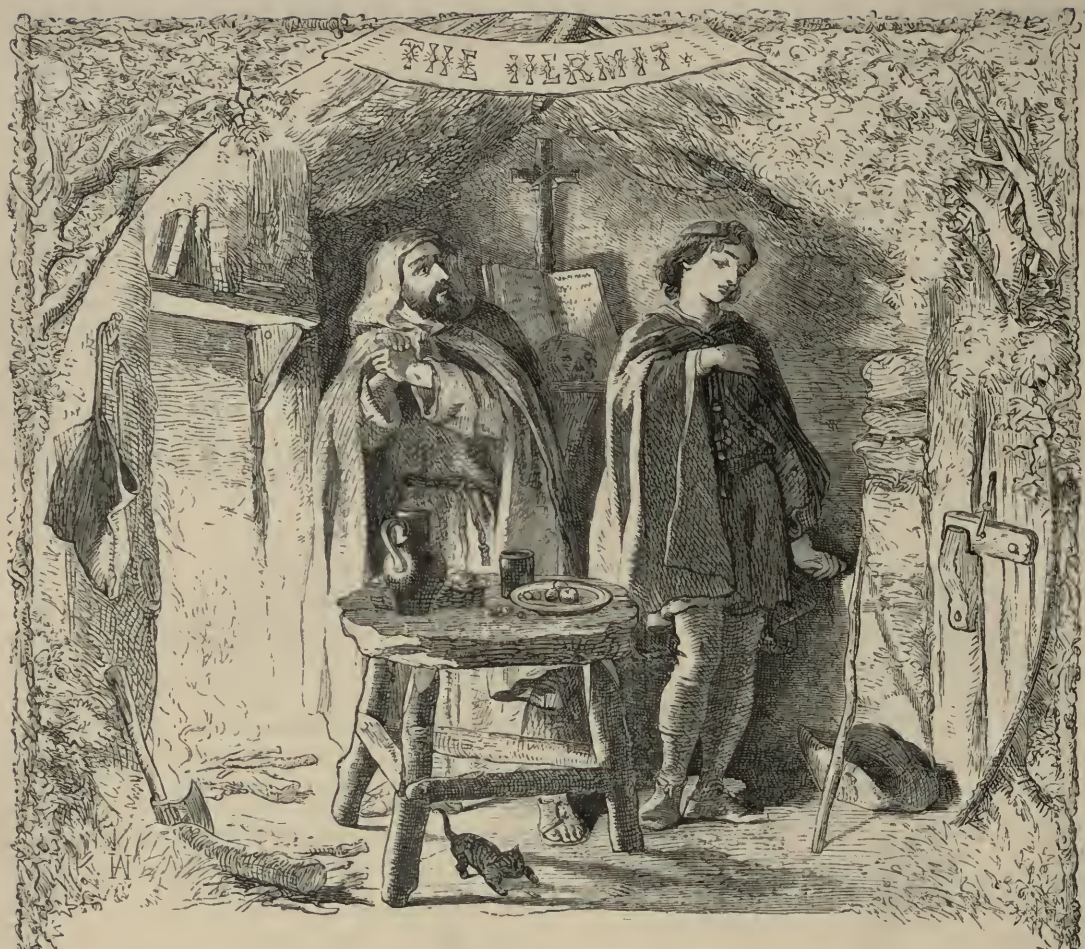
And now, when busy crowds retire,
To take their ev'ning rest,
The hermit trimm'd his little fire,
And cheer'd his pensive guest:

And spread his vegetable store,
And gaily press'd, and smil'd:
And, skill'd in legendary lore,
The lingering hours beguil'd.

Around, in sympathetic mirth,
Its tricks the kitten tries:
The cricket chirrups in the hearth,
The crackling faggot flies.

But nothing could a charm impart
To soothe the stranger's woe;
For grief was heavy at his heart,
And tears began to flow.

His rising cares the hermit spied,
With answering care oppress;
"And whence, unhappy youth," he cried,
"The sorrows of thy breast?



"From better habitations spurn'd,
Reluctant dost thou rove?
Or grieve for friendship unreturn'd,
Or unregarded love?

"Alas! the joys that fortune brings
Are trifling, and decay;
And those who prize the paltry things,
More trifling still than they;

"And what is friendship but a name,
A charm that lulls to sleep;
A shade that follows wealth or fame,
But leaves the wretch to weep?

"And love is still an emptier sound,
The modern fair-one's jest;
On earth unseen, or only found
To warm the turtle's nest.

"For shame, fond youth, thy sorrows hush,
And spurn the sex," he said:
But while he spoke, a rising blush
His love-lorn guest betray'd.

Surpris'd he sees new beauties rise,
Swift mantling to the view;
Like colours o'er the morning skies,
As bright, as transient too.

The bashful look, the rising breast,
Alternate spread alarms:
The lovely stranger stands confest
A maid in all her charms!

And, "Ah! forgive a stranger rude,
A wretch forlorn," she cried;
"Whose feet unhallow'd thus intrude
Where Heav'n and you reside.

"But let a maid thy pity share,
Whom love has taught to stray;
Who seeks for rest, but finds despair
Companion of her way.

"My father liv'd beside the Tyne,
A wealthy lord was he;
And all his wealth was mark'd as mine;
He had but only me.

"To win me from his tender arms,
Unnumber'd suitors came;
Who prais'd me for imputed charms,
And felt or feign'd a flame.

"Each hour a mercenary crowd
With richest proffers strove;
Among the rest young Edwin bow'd,
But never talk'd of love.

"In humble, simplest habit clad,
No wealth nor power had he;
Wisdom and worth were all he had,
But these were all to me.

"And when, beside me in the dale,
He caroll'd lays of love,
His breath lent fragrance to the gale,
And music to the grove.

"The blossom opening to the day,
The dews of heaven refin'd,
Could nought of purity display,
To emulate his mind.

"The dew, the blossom on the tree,
With charms inconstant shine;
Their charms were his, but woe to me,
Their constancy was mine.

"For still I tried each fickle art,
Importunate and vain;
And while his passion touch'd my heart,
I triumph'd in his pain.

"Till quite dejected with my scorn,
He left me to my pride;
And sought a solitude forlorn,
In secret, where he died.

"But mine the sorrow, mine the fault,
And well my life shall pay;
I'll seek the solitude he sought,
And stretch me where he lay.

"And there forlorn, despairing, hid,
I'll lay me down and die;
'Twas so for me that Edwin did,
And so for him will I."

"Forbid it, Heav'n!" the hermit cried,—
And clasp'd her to his breast:
The wond'ring fair one turn'd to chide—
'Twas Edwin's self that prest!

"Turn, Angelina, ever dear,
My charmer, turn to see
Thy own, thy long-lost Edwin here,
Restor'd to love and thee!

"Thus let me hold thee to my heart,
And ev'ry care resign:
And shall we never, never part,
My life—my all that's mine?

"No never from this hour to part,
We'll live and love so true;
The sigh that rends thy constant heart
Shall break thy Edwin's too."*

While this ballad was reading, Sophia seemed to mix an air of tenderness with her approbation. But our tranquillity was soon disturbed by the report of a gun just by us; and immediately after, a man was seen bursting through the hedge to take up the game he had killed. This sportsman was the Squire's chaplain, who had shot one of the blackbirds that so agreeably entertained us. So loud a report, and so near, startled my daughters; and I could perceive that Sophia, in the fright, had thrown herself into Mr. Burchell's arms for protection. The gentleman came up, and asked pardon for having disturbed us, affirm-

* This poem, under the title of "Edwin and Angelina," was written in 1774, when a few copies were printed for private use. On its first publication in "The Vicar of Wakefield," in 1776, Goldsmith was charged with having plagiarised from his friend Dr. Percy's "Friar of Orders Gray," which had appeared the year previously in the "Reliques of Early English Poetry." This charge Goldsmith at once publicly refuted, stating that his ballad was written and shown to Percy before the latter had composed the "Friar." The truth of this statement was confirmed by Percy, and has ever since been admitted. It is probable the plot of both ballads was suggested by "The Gentle Herdsman," which Percy showed to Goldsmith. For pathos, sentiment, simplicity, and finish, this ballad has few equals, and has ever enjoyed the largest popularity. The numerous emendations which the author made, prove the care he bestowed on it: even sacrificing two very sweet final verses, rather than weaken the effect of its close.

ing that he was ignorant of our being so near. He therefore sat down by my youngest daughter, and, sportsman-like, offered her what he had killed that morning. She was going to refuse, but a private look from her mother soon induced her to correct the mistake, and accept his present, though with some reluctance. My wife, as usual, discovered her pride in a whisper, observing that Sophy had made a conquest of the chaplain, as well as her sister had of the Squire. I suspected, however, with more probability, that her affections were placed upon a different object. The chaplain's errand was to inform us that Mr. Thornhill had provided music and refreshments, and intended that night giving the young ladies a ball by moonlight on the grass-plat before our door. "Nor can I deny," continued he, "but I have an interest in being first to deliver this message, as I expect for my reward to be honoured with Miss Sophia's hand as a partner." To this my girl replied, that she should have no objection if she could do it with honour. "But here," continued she, "is a gentleman," looking at Mr. Burchell, "who has been my companion in the task for the day, and it is fit he should share in its amusements." Mr. Burchell returned her a compliment for her intentions, but resigned her up to the chaplain, adding, that he was to go that night five miles, being invited to an harvest supper. His refusal appeared to me a little extraordinary, nor could I conceive how so sensible a girl as my youngest could thus prefer a man of broken fortunes to one whose expectations were much greater. But as men are most capable of distinguishing merit in women, so the ladies often form the truest judgments of us. The two sexes seem placed as spies upon each other, and are furnished with different abilities, adapted for mutual inspection.

CHAPTER IX.

TWO LADIES OF GREAT DISTINCTION INTRODUCED.—SUPERIOR FINERY EVER SEEMS TO CONFER SUPERIOR BREEDING.

MR. BURCHELL had scarce taken leave, and Sophia consented to dance with the chaplain, when my little ones came running out to tell us that the Squire was come with a crowd of company. Upon our return, we found our landlord with a couple of under-gentlemen, and two young ladies richly dressed, whom he introduced as women of very great distinction and fashion from town. We happened not to have chairs enough for the whole company; but Mr. Thornhill immediately proposed that every gentleman should sit in a lady's lap. This I positively objected to, notwithstanding a look of disapprobation from my wife. Moses was therefore dispatched to borrow a couple of chairs; and, as we were in want of ladies to make up a set at country dances, the two gentlemen went with him in quest of a couple of partners. Chairs and partners were soon provided. The gentlemen returned with my neighbour Flamborough's rosy daughters, flaunting with red top-knots. But an unlucky circumstance was not adverted to, though the Miss Flamboroughs were reckoned the very best of dancers in the parish, and understood the jig and the round-about to perfection, yet they were totally unacquainted with country dances. This at first discomposed us; however, after a little shoving and dragging, they at last went merrily on. Our music consisted of two fiddles, with a pipe and tabor. The moon shone bright; Mr. Thornhill and my eldest daughter led up the ball, to the great delight of the spectators; for the neighbours, hearing what was going forward, came flocking about us. My girl moved with so much grace and vivacity, that my wife could not avoid discovering the pride of her heart, by assuring me that, though the little chit did it so cleverly, all the steps were stolen from herself. The ladies of the town strove hard to be equally easy, but without success. They swam, sprawled, languished, and frisked; but all would not do; the gazers, indeed, owned that it was fine; but neighbour Flamborough observed, that Miss Livy's feet seemed as pat to the music as its echo. After the dance had continued about an hour, the two ladies, who were apprehensive of catching cold, moved to break up the ball. One of them, I thought,

THE MOONLIGHT BALL

expressed her sentiments upon this occasion in a very coarse manner, when she observed, that, by the *living jingo, she was all of a muck of sweat.* Upon our return to the house we found a very elegant cold supper, which Mr. Thornhill had ordered to be brought with him. The conversation, at this time, was more reserved than before. The two ladies threw my girls quite into the shade; for they would talk of nothing but high life, and high-lived company; with other fashionable topics, such as pictures, taste, Shakespeare, and the musical glasses. 'Tis true, they once or twice mortified us sensibly by slipping out an oath; but that appeared to me as the surest symptom of their distinction (though I am since informed that swearing is perfectly unfashionable). Their finery, however, threw a veil over any grossness in their conversation. My daughters seemed to regard their superior accomplishments with envy; and whatever appeared amiss was ascribed to tip-top quality breeding. But the condescension of the ladies was still superior to their other accomplishments. One of them observed that had Miss Olivia seen a little more of the world, it would greatly improve her. To which the other added, that a single winter in town

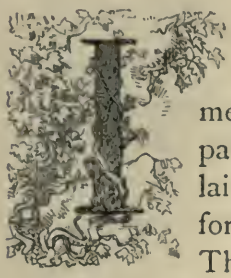
would make little Sophia quite another thing. My wife warmly assented to both; adding, that there was nothing she more ardently wished than to give her girls a single winter's polishing. To this I could not help replying, that their breeding was already superior to their fortune; and that greater refinement would only serve to make their poverty ridiculous, and give them a taste for pleasures they had no right to possess. "And what pleasures," cried Mr. Thornhill, "do they not deserve to possess, who have so much in their power to bestow? As for my part," continued he, "my fortune is pretty large; love, liberty, and pleasure, are my maxims; but, curse me, if a settlement of half my estate could give my charming Olivia pleasure, it should be hers, and the only favour I would ask in return would be to add myself to the benefit." I was not such a stranger to the world as to be ignorant that this was the fashionable cant to disguise the insolence of the basest proposal; but I made an effort to suppress my resentment. "Sir," cried I, "the family which you now condescend to favour with your company has been bred with as nice a sense of honour as you. Any attempts to injure that may be attended with very dangerous consequences. Honour, sir, is our only possession at present, and of that last treasure we must be particularly careful." I was soon sorry for the warmth with which I had spoken this, when the young gentleman, grasping my hand, swore he commended my spirit, though he disapproved my suspicions. "As to your present hint," continued he, "I protest nothing was further from my heart than such a thought. No, by all that's tempting, the virtue that will stand a regular siege was never to my taste; for all my amours are carried by a *coup de main*."

The two ladies, who affected to be ignorant of the rest, seemed highly displeased with this last stroke of freedom, and began a very discreet and serious dialogue upon virtue. In this my wife, the chaplain, and I soon joined; and the Squire himself was at last brought to confess a sense of sorrow for his former excesses. We talked of the pleasures of temperance, and of the sunshine in the mind unpolluted with guilt. I was so well pleased, that my little ones were kept up beyond the usual time, to be edified by so much good conversation. Mr. Thornhill even went beyond me, and demanded if I had any objection to giving prayers. I joyfully embraced the proposal; and in this manner the night was passed in a most comfortable way, till at length the company began to think of returning. The ladies seemed

very unwilling to part with my daughters, for whom they had conceived a particular affection, and joined in a request to have the pleasure of their company at home. The Squire seconded the proposal, and my wife added her entreaties; the girls, too, looked upon me as if they wished to go. In this perplexity I made two or three excuses, which my daughters as readily removed; so that at last I was obliged to give a peremptory refusal; for which we had nothing but sullen looks and short answers the whole day ensuing.

CHAPTER X.

THE FAMILY ENDEAVOURS TO COPE WITH THEIR BETTERS.—THE MISERIES OF THE POOR WHEN THEY ATTEMPT TO APPEAR ABOVE THEIR CIRCUMSTANCES.



NOW began to find that all my long and painful lectures upon temperance, simplicity, and contentment, were entirely disregarded. The distinctions lately paid us by our betters awakened that pride which I had laid asleep, but not removed. Our windows again, as formerly, were filled with washes for the neck and face. The sun was dreaded as an enemy to the skin without doors, and the fire as a spoiler of the complexion within. My wife observed, that rising too early would hurt her daughters' eyes, that working after dinner would redden their noses, and she convinced me that the hands never looked so white as when they did nothing. Instead, therefore, of finishing George's shirts, we now had them new-modelling their old gauzes, or flourishing upon catgut. The poor Miss Flamboroughs, their former gay companions, were cast off as mean acquaintance, and the whole conversation ran upon high life and high-lived company, with pictures, taste, Shakespeare, and the musical glasses.

But we could have borne all this, had not a fortune-telling gipsy come to raise us into perfect sublimity. The tawny sibyl no sooner appeared, than my girls came running to me for a shilling a-piece to cross her hand with silver. To say the truth, I was tired of being always wise, and could not help gratifying their request, because I

loved to see them happy. I gave each of them a shilling; though, for the honour of the family, it must be observed, that they never went without money themselves, as my wife always generously let them have a guinea each, to keep in their pockets; but with strict injunctions never to change it. After they had been closeted up with the fortune-teller for some time, I knew by their looks, upon their returning, that they had been promised something great. "Well, my girls, how have you sped? Tell me, Livy, has the fortune-teller given thee a pennyworth?" "I protest, papa," says the girl, "I believe she deals with somebody that's not right; for she positively declared, that I am to be married to a Squire in less than a twelvemonth!" "Well, now, Sophy, my child," said I, "and what sort of a husband are you to have?" "Sir," replied she, "I am to have a Lord soon after my sister has married the Squire." "How!" cried I, "is that all you are to have for your two shillings? Only a Lord and a Squire for two shillings!—You fools! I could have promised you a Prince and a Nabob for half the money."

This curiosity of theirs, however, was attended with very serious effects: we now began to think ourselves designed by the stars to something exalted, and already anticipated our future grandeur.

It has been a thousand times observed, and I must observe it once more, that the hours we pass with happy prospects in view are more pleasing than those crowned with fruition. In the first case, we cook the dish to our own appetite; in the latter, nature cooks it for us. It is impossible to repeat the train of agreeable reveries we called up for our entertainment. We looked upon our fortunes as once more rising; and as the whole parish asserted that the Squire was in love with my daughter, she was actually so with him; for they persuaded her into the passion. In this agreeable interval, my wife had the most lucky dreams in the world, which she took care to tell us every morning with great solemnity and exactness. It was one night a coffin and cross-bones, the sign of an approaching wedding; at another time she imagined her daughters' pockets filled with farthings, a certain sign that they would shortly be stuffed with gold. The girls themselves had their omens: they felt strange kisses on their lips; they saw rings in the candle; purses bounced from the fire; and true-love-knots lurked in the bottom of every tea-cup.

Towards the end of the week, we received a card from the town ladies; in which, with their compliments, they hoped to see all our family at

THE ROMANCE OF KING ARTHUR

church the Sunday following. All Saturday morning I could perceive, in consequence of this, my wife and daughters in close conference together, and now and then glancing at me with looks that betrayed a latent plot. To be sincere, I had strong suspicions that some absurd proposal was preparing for appearing with splendour the next day. In the evening, they began their operations in a very regular manner, and my wife undertook to conduct the siege. After tea, when I seemed in spirits, she began thus: "I fancy, Charles, my dear, we shall have a great deal of good company at our church to-morrow." "Perhaps we may, my dear," returned I; "though you need be under no uneasiness about that; you shall have a sermon, whether there be or not." "That is what I expect," returned she; "but I think, my dear, we ought to appear there as decently as possible, for who knows what may happen?" "Your precautions," replied I, "are highly commendable. A decent behaviour and appearance at church is what charms me. We should be devout and humble, cheerful and serene." "Yes," cried she, "I know that; but I mean we should go there in as proper a manner as possible; not altogether like the scrubs about us." "You are quite right, my dear," returned I, "and I was going to make the very same proposal. The proper manner of going is, to go there as early as possible, to have time for meditation before the service begins." "Phoo, Charles," interrupted she, "all that is very true; but not what I would be at. I mean, we should go there genteelly. You know the church is two miles off, and I protest I don't like to see my daughters trudging up to their pew all blowzed and red with walking, and looking for all the world as if they had been winners at a smock-race. Now, my dear, my proposal is this—there are our two plough horses, the colt that has been in our family these nine years, and his companion Blackberry, that has scarcely done an earthly thing for this month past: they are both grown fat and lazy: why should not they do something as well as we? And let me tell you, when Moses has trimmed them a little, they will cut a very tolerable figure."

To this proposal I objected, that walking would be twenty times more genteel than such a paltry conveyance, as Blackberry was wall-eyed, and the colt wanted a tail; that they had never been broke to the rein, but had a hundred vicious tricks; and that we had but one saddle and pillion in the whole house. All these objections, however, were overruled; so that I was obliged to comply. The next morning I perceived them not a little busy in collecting such materials as might

be necessary for the expedition; but, as I found it would be a business of time, I walked on to the church before, and they promised speedily to follow. I waited near an hour in the reading-desk for their arrival; but not finding them come as expected, I was obliged to begin, and went through the service, not without some uneasiness at finding them absent. This was increased when all was finished, and no appearance of the family. I therefore walked back by the horse-way which was five miles round, though the foot-way was but two, and when got about half way home, perceived the procession marching slowly forward towards the church—my son, my wife, and the two little ones, exalted on one horse, and my two daughters upon the other. I demanded the cause of their delay; but I soon found by their looks they had met with a thousand misfortunes on the road. The horses had at first refused to move from the door, till Mr. Burchell was kind enough to beat them forward for about two hundred yards with his cudgel. Next the straps of my wife's pillion broke down, and they were obliged to stop to repair them before they could proceed. After that, one of the horses took it into his head to stand still, and neither blows nor entreaties could prevail with him to proceed. He was just recovering from this dismal situation when I found them; but perceiving everything safe, I own their present mortification did not much displease me, as it would give me many opportunities of future triumph, and teach my daughters more humility.

CHAPTER XI.

THE FAMILY STILL RESOLVE TO HOLD UP THEIR HEADS.

MICHAELMAS-EVE happening on the next day, we were invited to burn nuts and play tricks at neighbour Flamborough's. Our late mortifications had humbled us a little, or it is probable we might have rejected such an invitation with contempt: however, we suffered ourselves to be happy. Our honest neighbour's goose and dumplings were fine; and the lamb's wool, even in the opinion of my wife, who was a connoisseur, was excellent. It is true, his manner of telling stories was not quite so well.

They were very long, and very dull, and all about himself, and we had laughed at them ten times before: however, we were kind enough to laugh at them once more.

Mr. Burchell, who was of the party, was always fond of seeing some innocent amusement going forward, and set the boys and girls to blind man's buff. My wife, too, was persuaded to join in the diversion, and it gave me pleasure to think she was not yet too old. In the meantime, my neighbour and I looked on, laughed at every feat, and praised our own dexterity when we were young. Hot cockles succeeded next, questions and commands followed that, and, last of all, they sate down to hunt the slipper. As every person may not be acquainted with this primæval pastime, it may be necessary to observe, that the company at this play plant themselves in a ring upon the ground, all except one who stands in the middle, whose business it is to catch a shoe, which the company shove about under their hams from one to another, something like a weaver's shuttle. As it is impossible, in this case, for the lady who is up to face all the company at once, the great beauty of the play lies in hitting her a thump with the heel of the shoe on that side least capable of making a defence. It was in this manner that my eldest daughter was hemmed in, and thumped about, all blowzed, in spirits, and bawling for fair play, with a voice that might deafen a ballad-singer, when, confusion on confusion, who should enter the room but our two great acquaintances from town, Lady Blarney and Miss Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Skeggs! Description would but beggar, therefore it is unnecessary to describe this new mortification. Death! to be seen by ladies of such high breeding in such vulgar attitudes! Nothing better could ensue from such a vulgar play of Mr. Flamborough's proposing. We seemed stuck to the ground for some time, as if actually petrified with amazement.

The two ladies had been at our house to see us, and, finding us from home, came after us hither, as they were uneasy to know what accident could have kept us from church the day before. Olivia undertook to be our prolocutor, and delivered the whole in a summary way, only saying—"We were thrown from our horses." At which account the ladies were greatly concerned; but being told the family received no hurt, they were extremely glad; but being informed that we were almost killed with fright, they were vastly sorry; but hearing that we had a very good night, they were extremely glad again. Nothing could exceed their complaisance to my daughters; their professions

THE FAMILY GOING TO CHURCH

the last evening were warm, but now they were ardent. They protested a desire of having a more lasting acquaintance. Lady Blarney was particularly attached to Olivia; Miss Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Skeggs (I love to give the whole name) took a greater fancy to her sister. They supported the conversation between themselves, while my daughters sate silent, admiring their exalted breeding. But as every reader, however beggarly himself, is fond of high-lived dialogues, with anecdotes of Lords, Ladies, and Knights of the Garter, I must beg leave to give him the concluding part of the present conversation.

"All that I know of the matter," cried Miss Skeggs, "is this, that it may be true, or it may not be true; but this I can assure your Ladyship, that the whole rout was in amaze; his Lordship turned all manner of colours, my Lady fell into a swoon; but Sir Tomkyn, drawing his sword, swore he was hers to the last drop of his blood."

"Well," replied our Peeress, "this I can say, that the duchess never told me a syllable of the matter, and I believe her grace would keep nothing a secret from me. This you may depend upon as fact, that

the next morning my Lord Duke cried out three times to his valet-de-chambre, Jernigan! Jernigan! Jernigan! bring me my garters."

But previously I should have mentioned the very impolite behaviour of Mr. Burchell, who, during this discourse, sat with his face turned to the fire, and at the conclusion of every sentence would cry out *Fudge!* an expression which displeased us all, and in some measure damped the rising spirit of the conversation.

"Besides, my dear Skeggs," continued our Peeress, "there is nothing of this in the copy of verses that Dr. Burdock made upon the occasion." *Fudge!*

"I am surprised at that," cried Miss Skeggs; "for he seldom leaves anything out, as he writes only for his own amusement. But can your Ladyship favour me with a sight of them?" *Fudge!*

"My dear creature," replied our Peeress, "do you think I carry such things about me? Though they are very fine to be sure, and I think myself something of a judge: at least I know what pleases myself. Indeed, I was ever an admirer of all Dr. Burdock's little pieces; for except what he does, and our dear Countess at Hanover Square, there's nothing comes out but the most lowest stuff in nature; not a bit of high life among them." *Fudge!*

"Your Ladyship should except," says t'other, "your own things in the 'Lady's Magazine.' I hope you'll say there's nothing low-lived there? But I suppose we are to have no more from that quarter?" *Fudge!*

"Why, my dear," says the Lady, "you know my reader and companion has left me to be married to Captain Roach, and as my poor eyes won't suffer me to write myself, I have been for some time looking out for another. A proper person is no easy matter to find, and, to be sure, thirty pounds a year is a small stipend for a well-bred girl of character, that can read, write, and behave in company: as for the chits about town, there is no bearing them about one." *Fudge!*

"That I know," cried Miss Skeggs, "by experience; for of the three companions I had this last half-year, one of them refused to do plain-work an hour in the day; another thought twenty-five guineas a year too small a salary; and I was obliged to send away the third, because I suspected an intrigue with the chaplain. Virtue, my dear Lady Blarney, virtue is worth any price: but where is that to be found?" *Fudge!*

My wife had been for a long time all attention to this discourse, but

was particularly struck with the latter part of it. Thirty pounds and twenty-five guineas a year, made fifty-six pounds five shillings English money; all which was in a manner going a begging, and might easily be secured in the family. She for a moment studied my looks for approbation; and, to own a truth, I was of opinion, that two such places would fit our two daughters exactly. Besides, if the Squire had any real affection for my eldest daughter, this would be the way to make her every way qualified for her fortune. My wife, therefore, was resolved that we should not be deprived of such advantages for want of assurance, and undertook to harangue for the family "I hope," cried she, "your Ladyships will pardon my present presumption. It is true, we have no right to pretend to such favours, but yet it is natural for me to wish putting my children forward in the world. And I will be bold to say, my two girls have had a pretty good education, and capacity; at least, the country can't show better. They can read, write, and cast accounts; they understand their needle, broad-stitch, cross and change, and all manner of plainwork; they can pink, point, and frill; and know something of music; they can do up small clothes; work upon catgut; my eldest can cut paper, and my youngest has a very pretty manner of telling fortunes upon the cards." *Fudge!*

When she had delivered this pretty piece of eloquence, the two ladies looked at each other a few minutes in silence, with an air of doubt and importance. At last Miss Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Skeggs condescended to observe, that the young ladies, from the opinion she could form of them from so slight an acquaintance, seemed very fit for such employments: "but a thing of this kind, madam," cried she, addressing my spouse, "requires a thorough examination into characters, and a more perfect knowledge of each other. Not, madam," continued she, "that I in the least suspect the young ladies' virtue, prudence, and discretion; but there is a form in these things, madam; there is a form." *Fudge!*

My wife approved her suspicions very much, observing, that she was very apt to be suspicious herself; but referred her to all the neighbours for a character: but this our Peeress declined as unnecessary, alleging that her cousin Thornhill's recommendation would be sufficient, and upon this we rested our petition.

HUNT THE SLIPPER.

CHAPTER XII.

FORTUNE SEEMS RESOLVED TO HUMBLE THE FAMILY OF WAKEFIELD.—MORTIFICATIONS ARE OFTEN MORE PAINFUL THAN REAL CALAMITIES.

WHEN we were returned home, the night was dedicated to schemes of future conquest. Deborah exerted much sagacity in conjecturing which of the two girls was likely to have the best place, and most opportunities of seeing good company. The only obstacle to our preferment was in obtaining the Squire's recommendation; but he had already shown us too many instances of his friendship to doubt of it now. Even in bed my wife kept up the usual theme: "Well, faith, my dear Charles, between ourselves, I think we have made an excellent day's work of it." "Pretty well," cried I, not knowing what to say. "What, only pretty well!" returned she: "I think it is very well. Suppose the girls should come to make acquaintances of taste in town! This I am assured of, that

London is the only place in the world for all manner of husbands. Besides, my dear, stranger things happen every day: and as ladies of quality are so taken with my daughters, what will not men of quality be? *Entre nous*, I protest I like my Lady Blarney vastly: so very obliging. However, Miss Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Skeggs has my warm heart. But yet, when they came to talk of places in town, you saw at once how I nailed them. Tell me, my dear, don't you think I did for my children there?" "Ay," returned I, not knowing well what to think of the matter; "Heaven grant they may be both the better for it this day three months!" This was one of those observations I usually made to impress my wife with an opinion of my sagacity: for if the girls succeeded, then it was a pious wish fulfilled; but if anything unfortunate ensued, then it might be looked upon as a prophecy. All this conversation, however, was only preparatory to another scheme, and indeed I dreaded as much. This was nothing less than that, as we were now to hold up our heads a little higher in the world, it would be proper to sell the colt, which was grown old, at a neighbouring fair, and buy us a horse that would carry single or double upon an occasion, and make a pretty appearance at church or upon a visit. This at first I opposed stoutly, but it was as stoutly defended. However, as I weakened, my antagonists gained strength, till at last it was resolved to part with him.

As the fair happened on the following day, I had intentions of going myself; but my wife persuaded me that I had got a cold, and nothing could prevail upon her to permit me from home. "No, my dear," said she, "our son Moses is a discreet boy, and can buy and sell to very good advantage; you know all our great bargains are of his purchasing. He always stands out and higgles, and actually tires them till he gets a bargain."

As I had some opinion of my son's prudence, I was willing enough to entrust him with this commission; and the next morning I perceived his sisters mighty busy in fitting out Moses for the fair; trimming his hair, brushing his buckles, and cocking his hat with pins. The business of the toilet being over, we had at last the satisfaction of seeing him mounted upon the colt, with a deal box before him to bring home groceries in. He had on a coat made of that cloth called thunder and lightning, which, though grown too short, was much too good to be thrown away. His waistcoat was of gosling green, and his sisters had tied his hair with a broad black ribbon. We all

followed him several paces from the door, bawling after him, "Good luck! good luck!" till we could see him no longer.

He was scarcely gone, when Mr. Thornhill's butler came to congratulate us upon our good fortune, saying that he overheard his young master mention our names with great commendation.

Good fortune seemed resolved not to come alone. Another footman from the same family followed, with a card for my daughters, importing that the two ladies had received such pleasing accounts from Mr. Thornhill of us all, that, after a few previous inquiries, they hoped to be perfectly satisfied. "Ay," cried my wife, "I now see it is no easy matter to get into the families of the great, but when one once gets in, then, as Moses says, one may go to sleep." To this piece of humour, for she intended it for wit, my daughters assented with a loud laugh of pleasure. In short, such was her satisfaction at this message, that she actually put her hand in her pocket, and gave the messenger sevenpence halfpenny.

This was to be our visiting day. The next that came was Mr. Burchell, who had been at the fair. He brought my little ones a pennyworth of gingerbread each, which my wife undertook to keep for them, and give them by letters at a time. He brought my daughters also a couple of boxes, in which they might keep wafers, snuff, patches, or even money, when they got it. My wife was usually fond of a weasel-skin purse, as being the most lucky; but this by-the-bye. We had still a regard for Mr. Burchell, though his late rude behaviour was in some measure displeasing; nor could we now avoid communicating our happiness to him, and asking his advice: although we seldom followed advice, we were all ready enough to ask it. When he read the note from the two ladies he shook his head, and observed that an affair of this sort demanded the utmost circumspection. This air of diffidence highly displeased my wife. "I never doubted, sir," cried she, "your readiness to be against my daughters and me. You have more circumspection than is wanted. However, I fancy when we come to ask advice, we shall apply to persons who seem to have made use of it themselves."—"Whatever my own conduct may have been, madam," replied he, "is not the present question; though as I have made no use of advice myself, I should in conscience give it to those that will." As I was apprehensive this answer might draw on a repartee, making up by abuse what it wanted in wit, I changed the subject, by seeming to wonder what could keep our son

so long at the fair, as it was now almost nightfall. "Never mind our son," cried my wife, "depend upon it he knows what he is about; I'll warrant we'll never see him sell his hen of a rainy day. I have seen him buy such bargains as would amaze one. I'll tell you a good story about that, that will make you split your sides with laughing. But as I live, yonder comes Moses, without a horse, and the box at his back."

As she spoke, Moses came slowly on foot, and sweating under the deal box, which he had strapped round his shoulders like a pedlar. "Welcome! welcome, Moses! well, my boy, what have you brought us from the fair?"—"I have brought you myself," cried Moses, with a sly look, and resting the box on the dresser. "Ah, Moses," cried my wife, "that we know, but where is the horse?"—"I have sold him," cried Moses, "for three pounds five shillings and twopence."—"Well done, my good boy," returned she; "I knew you would touch them off. Between ourselves, three pounds five shillings and twopence is no bad day's work. Come, let us have it then."—"I have brought back no money," cried Moses again, "I have laid it all out in a bargain, and here it is," pulling out a bundle from his breast; "here they are; a gross of green spectacles, with silver rims and shagreen cases."—"A gross of green spectacles!" repeated my wife, in a faint voice. "And you have parted with the colt, and brought us back nothing but a gross of green paltry spectacles!"—"Dear mother," cried the boy, "why won't you listen to reason? I had them a dead bargain or I should not have bought them. The silver rims alone will sell for double the money."—"A fig for the silver rims!" cried my wife in a passion; "I dare swear they won't sell for above half the money at the rate of broken silver, five shillings an ounce."—"You need be under no uneasiness," cried I, "about selling the rims, for they are not worth sixpence, for I perceive they are only copper varnished over."—"What," cried my wife, "not silver! the rims not silver!"—"No," cried I, "no more silver than your saucepan."—"And so," returned she, "we have parted with the colt, and have only got a gross of green spectacles with copper rims and shagreen cases! A murrain take such trumpery. The blockhead has been imposed upon, and should have known his company better!"—"There, my dear," cried I, "you are wrong; he should not have known them at all."—"Marry, hang the idiot!" returned she, "to bring me such stuff; if I had them I would throw them in the fire."—"There again you are wrong, my dear," cried I;

MOSES' RETURN FROM THE FAIR.

"for though they be copper, we will keep them by us, as copper spectacles, you know, are better than nothing."

By this time the unfortunate Moses was undeceived. He now saw that he had been imposed upon by a prowling sharper, who, observing his figure, had marked him for an easy prey. I therefore asked him the circumstances of his deception. He sold the horse, it seems, and walked the fair in search of another. A reverend-looking man brought him to a tent, under pretence of having one to sell. "Here," continued Moses, "we met another man, very well dressed, who desired to borrow twenty pounds upon these, saying that he wanted money, and would dispose of them for a third of their value. The first gentleman, who pretended to be my friend, whispered me to buy them, and cautioned me not to let so good an offer pass. I sent for Mr. Flamborough, and they talked him up as finely as they did me; and so at last we were persuaded to buy the two gross between us."

CHAPTER XIII.

MR. BURCHELL IS FOUND TO BE AN ENEMY; FOR HE HAS THE CONFIDENCE TO GIVE DISAGREEABLE ADVICE.

OUR family had now made several attempts to be fine; but some unforeseen disaster demolished each as soon as projected. I endeavoured to take the advantage of every disappointment to improve their good sense, in proportion as they were frustrated in ambition. "You see, my children," cried I, "how little is to be got by attempts to impose upon the world, in coping with our betters. Such as are poor, and will associate with none but the rich, are hated by those they avoid, and despised by those they follow. Unequal combinations are always disadvantageous to the weaker side; the rich, having the pleasure, the poor the inconveniences, that result from them. But come, Dick, my boy, and repeat the fable you were reading to-day, for the good of the company."

"Once upon a time," cried the child, "a giant and a dwarf were friends, and kept together. They made a bargain that they would never forsake each other, but go seek adventures. The first battle

they fought was with two Saracens; and the dwarf, who was very courageous, dealt one of the champions a most angry blow. It did the Saracen but very little injury, who, lifting up his sword, fairly struck off the poor dwarf's arm. He was now in a woful plight; but the giant, coming to his assistance, in a short time left the two Saracens dead on the plain, and the dwarf cut off the dead man's head out of spite. They then travelled on to another adventure. This was against three bloody-minded satyrs, who were carrying away a damsel in distress. The dwarf was not quite so fierce now as before; but for all that struck the first blow, which was returned by another that knocked out his eye; but the giant was soon up with them, and, had they not fled, would certainly have killed them every one. They were all very joyful for this victory, and the damsel who was relieved fell in love with the giant, and married him. They now travelled far, and farther than I can tell, till they met with a company of robbers. The giant, for the first time, was foremost now: but the dwarf was not far behind. The battle was stout and long. Wherever the giant came, all fell before him; but the dwarf had like to have been killed more than once. At last, the victory declared for the two adventurers; but the dwarf lost his leg. The dwarf was now without an arm, a leg, and an eye, while the giant was without a single wound. Upon which he cried out to his little companion, 'My little hero, this is glorious sport; let us get one victory more, and then we shall have honour for ever.' —'No,' cries the dwarf, who was by this time grown wiser, 'no; I declare off; I'll fight no more, for I find, in every battle, that you get all the honour and rewards, but all the blows fall upon me.'"

I was going to moralise this fable, when our attention was called off to a warm dispute between my wife and Mr. Burchell, upon my daughters' intended expedition to town. My wife very strenuously insisted upon the advantages that would result from it. Mr. Burchell, on the contrary, dissuaded her with great ardour, and I stood neuter. His present dissuasions seemed but the second part of those which were received with so ill a grace in the morning. The dispute grew high, while poor Deborah, instead of reasoning stronger, talked louder, and was at last obliged to take shelter from a defeat in clamour. The conclusion of her harangue, however, was highly displeasing to us all: she knew, she said, of some who had their own secret reasons for what they advised; but for her part, she wished such to stay away from her house for the future. "Madam," cried Burchell, with looks of great

composure, which tended to inflame her the more, "as for secret reasons, you are right; I have secret reasons which I forbear to mention, because you are not able to answer those of which I make no secret. But I find my visits here are become troublesome; I'll take my leave therefore now, and perhaps come once more to take a final farewell when I am quitting the country." Thus saying, he took up his hat; nor could the attempts of Sophia, whose looks seemed to upbraid his precipitancy, prevent his going.

When gone, we all regarded each other for some minutes with confusion. My wife, who knew herself to be the cause, strove to hide her concern with a forced smile, and an air of assurance, which I was willing to reprove: "How, woman!" cried I to her, "is it thus we treat strangers? Is it thus we return their kindness? Be assured, my dear, that these were the harshest words, and to me the most unpleasing, that have escaped your lips!"—"Why would he provoke me, then?" replied she; "but I know the motives of his advice perfectly well. He would prevent my girls from going to town, that he may have the pleasure of my youngest daughter's company here at home. But whatever happens, she shall choose better company than such low-lived fellows as he."—"Low-lived, my dear, do you call him?" cried I: "it is very possible we may mistake this man's character; for he seems, upon some occasions, the most finished gentleman I ever knew. Tell me, Sophia, my girl, has he ever given you any secret instances of his attachment?"—"His conversation with me, sir," replied my daughter, "has ever been sensible, modest, and pleasing. As to aught else, no, never. Once, indeed, I remember to have heard him say, he never knew a woman who could find merit in a man that seemed poor."—"Such, my dear," cried I, "is the common cant of all the unfortunate or idle. But I hope you have been taught to judge properly of such men, and that it would be even madness to expect happiness from one who has been so very bad an economist of his own. Your mother and I have now better prospects for you. The next winter, which you will probably spend in town, will give you opportunities of making a more prudent choice."

What Sophia's reflections were upon this occasion, I cannot pretend to determine; but I was not displeased at the bottom, that we were rid of a guest from whom I had much to fear. Our breach of hospitality went to my conscience a little; but I quickly silenced that monitor by two or three specious reasons, which served to satisfy and

reconcile me to myself. The pain which conscience gives the man who has already done wrong is soon got over. Conscience is a coward, and those faults it has not strength enough to prevent, it seldom has justice enough to accuse.

CHAPTER XIV.

FRESH MORTIFICATIONS, OR A DEMONSTRATION THAT SEEMING CALAMITIES MAY BE REAL BLESSINGS.

THE journey of my daughters to town was now resolved upon, Mr. Thornhill having kindly promised to inspect their conduct himself, and inform us by letter of their behaviour. But it was thought indispensably necessary that their appearance should equal the greatness of their expectations, which could not be done without expense. We debated, therefore, in full council, what were the easiest methods of raising money; or, more properly speaking, what we could most conveniently sell. The deliberation was soon finished: it was found that our remaining horse was utterly useless for the plough without his companion, and equally unfit for the road, as wanting an eye: it was therefore determined that we should dispose of him, for the purpose above mentioned, at the neighbouring fair; and, to prevent imposition, that I should go with him myself. Though this was one of the first mercantile transactions of my life, yet I had no doubt about acquitting myself with reputation. The opinion a man forms of his own prudence is measured by that of the company he keeps, and as mine was mostly in the family way, I had conceived no unfavourable sentiments of my worldly wisdom. My wife, however, next morning at parting, after I had got some paces from the door, called me back, to advise me, in a whisper, to have all my eyes about me.

I had, in the usual forms, when I came to the fair, put my horse through all his paces, but for some time had no bidders. At last a chapman approached, and after he had for a good while examined the horse round, finding him blind of one eye, he would have nothing to

say to him ; a second came up, but observing he had a spavin, declared he would not take him for the driving home ; a third perceived he had a windgall, and would bid no money ; a fourth knew by his eye that he had the botts ; a fifth wondered what a plague I could do at the fair with a blind, spavined, galled hack, that was only fit to be cut up for a dog-kennel. By this time I began to have a most hearty contempt for the poor animal myself, and was almost ashamed at the approach of every customer ; for though I did not entirely believe all the fellows told me, yet I reflected that the number of witnesses was a strong presumption they were right; and St. Gregory, upon good works, professes himself to be of the same opinion.

I was in this mortifying situation, when a brother clergyman, an old acquaintance, who had also business at the fair, came up, and shaking me by the hand, proposed adjourning to a public-house, and taking a glass of whatever we could get. I readily closed with the offer, and, entering an alehouse, we were shown into a little back room, where there was only a venerable old man, who sat wholly intent over a large book, which he was reading. I never in my life saw a figure that prepossessed me more favourably. His locks of silver grey venerably shaded his temples, and his green old age seemed to be the result of health and benevolence. However, his presence did not interrupt our conversation : my friend and I discoursed on the various turns of fortune we had met ; the Whistonian controversy, my last pamphlet, the archdeacon's reply, and the hard measure that was dealt me. But our attention was in a short time taken off by the appearance of a youth, who, entering the room, respectfully said something softly to the old stranger. "Make no apologies, my child," said the old man : "to do good is a duty we owe to all our fellow-creatures ; take this, I wish it were more : but five pounds will relieve your distress, and you are welcome." The modest youth shed tears of gratitude, and yet his gratitude was scarce equal to mine. I could have hugged the good old man in my arms, his benevolence pleased me so. He continued to read, and we resumed our conversation, until my companion, after some time, recollecting that he had business to transact in the fair, promised to be soon back ; adding, that he always desired to have as much of Dr. Primrose's company as possible. The old gentleman hearing my name mentioned, seemed to look at me with attention for some time, and when my friend was gone, most respectfully demanded if I was in any way related to the great Primrose, that

courageous monogamist, who had been the bulwark of the church. Never did my heart feel sincerer rapture than at that moment. "Sir," cried I, "the applause of so good a man, as I am sure you are, adds to that happiness in my breast which your benevolence has already excited. You behold before you, sir, that Dr. Primrose, the monogamist, whom you have been pleased to call great. You here see that unfortunate divine, who has so long, and it would ill become me to say successfully, fought against the deuterogamy of the age." "Sir," cried the stranger, struck with awe, "I fear I have been too familiar; but you'll forgive my curiosity, sir: I beg pardon." "Sir," cried I, grasping his hand, "you are so far from displeasing me by your familiarity, that I must beg you'll accept my friendship, as you already have my esteem." "Then with gratitude I accept the offer," cried he, squeezing me by the hand, "thou glorious pillar of unshaken orthodoxy; and do I behold ——" I here interrupted what he was going to say; for though, as an author, I could digest no small share of flattery, yet now my modesty would permit no more. However, no lovers in romance ever cemented a more instantaneous friendship. We talked upon several subjects; at first, I thought him rather devout than learned, and began to think he despised all human doctrines as dross. Yet this no way lessened him in my esteem; for I had for some time begun privately to harbour such an opinion myself. I therefore took occasion to observe, that the world in general began to be blameably indifferent as to doctrinal matters, and followed human speculations too much. "Ay, sir," replied he, as if he had reserved all his learning to that moment, "ay, sir, the world is in its dotage, and yet the cosmogony, or creation of the world, has puzzled philosophers of all ages. What a medley of opinions have they not broached upon the creation of the world! Sanchoniathon, Manetho, Berosus, and Ocellus Lucanus, have all attempted it in vain. The latter has these words, *Anarchon ara kai atelutaion to pan*, which imply that all things have neither beginning nor end. Manetho also, who lived about the time of Nebuchadon-Asser—Asser being a Syriac word usually applied as a surname to the kings of that country, as Teglat Phael-Asser; Nabon-Asser—he, I say, formed a conjecture equally absurd; for, as we usually say, *ek to biblion kubernetes*, which implies that books will never teach the world; so he attempted to investigate——. But, sir, I ask pardon, I am straying from the question." That he actually was; nor could I for my life see how the creation of the world had anything to do with the

business I was talking of; but it was sufficient to show me that he was a man of letters, and I now reverenced him the more. I was resolved, therefore, to bring him to the touchstone; but he was too mild and too gentle to contend for victory. Whenever I made any observation that looked like a challenge to controversy, he would smile, shake his head, and say nothing; by which I understood he could say much if he thought proper. The subject, therefore, insensibly changed from the business of antiquity to that which brought us both to the fair; mine, I told him, was to sell a horse; and, very luckily indeed, his was to buy one for one of his tenants. My horse was soon produced, and in fine we struck a bargain. Nothing now remained but to pay me, and he accordingly pulled out a thirty-pound note, and bade me change it. Not being in a capacity of complying with his demand, he ordered his footman to be called up, who made his appearance in a very genteel livery. "Here, Abraham," cried he, "go and get gold for this; you'll do it at neighbour Jackson's, or anywhere." While the fellow was gone, he entertained me with a pathetic harangue on the great scarcity of silver, which I undertook to

improve by deploring also the great scarcity of gold; so that, by the time Abraham returned, we had both agreed that money was never so hard to be come at as now. Abraham returned to inform us, that he had been over the whole fair and could not get change, though he had offered half-a-crown for doing it. This was a very great disappointment to us all; but the old gentleman having paused a little, asked me if I knew one Solomon Flamborough in my part of the country; upon replying that he was my next door neighbour, "If that be the case, then," returned he, "I believe we shall deal. You shall have a draft upon him, payable at sight; and let me tell you, he is as warm a man as any within five miles round him. Honest Solomon and I have been acquainted for many years together. I remember I always beat him at three jumps; but he could hop upon one leg farther than I." A draft upon my neighbour was to me the same as money, for I was sufficiently convinced of his ability: the draft was signed and put into my hands; and Mr. Jenkinson, the old gentleman, his man Abraham, and my horse, old Blackberry, trotted off very well pleased with each other.

After a short interval, being left to reflection, I began to recollect that I had done wrong in taking a draft from a stranger, and so prudently resolved upon following the purchaser, and having back my horse. But this was now too late. I therefore made directly homewards, resolving to get the draft changed into money at my friend's as fast as possible. I found my honest neighbour smoking his pipe at his own door, and informing him that I had a small bill upon him, he read it twice over. "You can read the name, I suppose," cried I, "Ephraim Jenkinson." "Yes," returned he, "the name is written plain enough, and I know the gentleman too, the greatest rascal under the canopy of heaven. This is the very same rogue who sold us the spectacles. Was he not a venerable-looking man, with grey hair, and no flaps to his pocket-holes? and did he not talk a long string of learning about Greek, cosmogony, and the world?" To this I replied with a groan. "Ay," continued he, "he has but that one piece of learning in the world, and he always talks it away whenever he finds a scholar in company: but I know the rogue, and will catch him yet."

Though I was already sufficiently mortified, my greatest struggle was to come, in facing my wife and daughters. No truant was ever more afraid of returning to school, there to behold the master's visage, than I was of going home. I was determined, however, to anticipate their fury, by first falling into a passion myself.

But, alas! upon entering, I found the family no way disposed for battle. My wife and girls were all in tears, Mr. Thornhill having been there that day to inform them that their journey to town was entirely over. The two ladies, having heard reports of us from some malicious person about us, were that day set out for London. He could neither discover the tendency nor the author of these; but, whatever they might be, or whoever might have broached them, he continued to assure our family of his friendship and protection. I found, therefore, that they bore my disappointment with great resignation, as it was eclipsed in the greatness of their own. But what perplexed us most, was to think who could be so base as to asperse the character of a family so harmless as ours—too humble to excite envy, and too inoffensive to create disgust.

CHAPTER XV.

ALL MR. BURCHELL'S VILLANY AT ONCE DETECTED—THE FOLLY OF BEING OVERWISE.

THAT evening, and part of the following day, was employed in fruitless attempts to discover our enemies: scarcely a family in the neighbourhood but incurred our suspicions, and each of us had reasons for our opinion best known to ourselves. As we were in this perplexity, one of our little boys, who had been playing abroad, brought in a letter-case, which he found on the green. It was quickly known to belong to Mr. Burchell, with whom it had been seen; and, upon examination, contained some hints upon different subjects; but what particularly engaged our attention was a sealed note, superscribed, "The copy of a letter to be sent to the two ladies at Thornhill Castle." It instantly occurred that he was the base informer; and we deliberated whether the note should not be broken open. I was against it; but Sophia, who said she was sure that of all men he would be the last to be guilty of so much baseness, insisted upon its being read. In this she was seconded by the rest of the family; and, at their joint solicitation, I read as follows:—

LADIES,

The bearer will sufficiently satisfy you as to the person from whom this comes: one at least the friend of innocence, and ready to prevent its being seduced. I am informed for a truth, that you have some intention of bringing two young ladies to town, whom I have some knowledge of, under the character of companions. As I would neither have simplicity imposed upon, nor virtue contaminated, I must offer it as my opinion, that the impropriety of such a step will be attended with dangerous consequences. It has never been my way to treat the infamous or the lewd with severity; nor should I now have taken this method of explaining myself, or reproving folly, did it not aim at guilt. Take, therefore, the admonition of a friend, and seriously reflect on the consequences of introducing infamy and vice into retreats where peace and innocence have hitherto resided.

Our doubts were now at an end. There seemed, indeed, something applicable to both sides in this letter, and its censures might as well be referred to those to whom it was written as to us; but the malicious meaning was obvious, and we went no farther. My wife had scarcely patience to hear me to the end, but railed at the writer with unrestrained resentment. Olivia was equally severe, and Sophia seemed perfectly amazed at his baseness. As for my part, it appeared to me one of the vilest instances of unprovoked ingratitude I had ever met with. Nor could I account for it in any other manner than by imputing it to his desire of detaining my youngest daughter in the country, to have the more frequent opportunities of an interview. In this manner we all sat ruminating upon schemes of vengeance, when our other little boy came running in to tell us that Mr. Burchell was approaching at the other end of the field. It is easier to conceive than describe the complicated sensations which are felt from the pain of a recent injury, and the pleasure of approaching vengeance. Though our intentions were only to upbraid him with his ingratitude, yet it was resolved to do it in a manner that would be perfectly cutting. For this purpose we agreed to meet him with our usual smiles, to chat in the beginning with more than ordinary kindness, to amuse him a little; and then, in the midst of the flattering calm, to burst upon him like an earthquake, and overwhelm him with the sense of his own baseness. This being resolved upon, my wife undertook to manage the business herself, as she really had some talents for such an undertaking. We saw him approach; he entered, drew a chair, and sat down. "A fine day, Mr. Burchell." "A very fine day, Doctor; though I fancy we shall have some rain, by the shooting of my corns." "The shooting of your horns," cried my wife, in a loud fit of laughter, and then asked pardon for being fond of a joke. "Dear madam," replied he, "I pardon you with all my heart; for I protest I should not have thought

it a joke, had you not told me." "Perhaps not, sir," cried my wife, winking at us; "and yet I dare say you can tell us how many jokes go to an ounce." "I fancy, madam," returned Burchell, "you have been reading a jest-book this morning, that ounce of jokes is so very good a conceit; and yet, madam, I had rather see half an ounce of understanding." "I believe you might," cried my wife, still smiling at us, though the laugh was against her; "and yet I have seen some men pretend to understanding, that have very little."—"And no doubt," replied her antagonist, "you have known ladies set up for wit that had none." I quickly began to find that my wife was likely to gain but little at this business; so I resolved to treat him in a style of more severity myself. "Both wit and understanding," cried I, "are trifles without integrity; it is that which gives value to every character; the ignorant peasant, without fault, is greater than the philosopher with many; for what is genius or courage without a heart?

"'An honest man's the noblest work of God.'"

"I always held that hackneyed maxim of Pope's," returned Mr.

Burchell, "as very unworthy of a man of genius, and a base desertion of his own superiority. As the reputation of books is raised, not by their freedom from defect, but the greatness of their beauties; so should that of men be prized, not from their exemption from fault, but the size of those virtues they are possessed of. The scholar may want prudence; the statesman may have pride; and the champion ferocity: but shall we prefer to these the low mechanic, who laboriously plods on through life without censure or applause? We might as well prefer the tame correct paintings of the Flemish school to the erroneous, but sublime animations of the Roman pencil."

"Sir," replied I, "your present observation is just, when there are shining virtues and minute defects; but when it appears that great vices are opposed in the same mind to as extraordinary virtues, such a character deserves contempt."

"Perhaps," cried he, "there may be some such monsters as you describe, of great vices joined to great virtues; yet, in my progress through life, I never yet found one instance of their existence: on the contrary, I have ever perceived, that where the mind was capacious, the affections were good. And, indeed, Providence seems kindly our friend in this particular, thus to debilitate the understanding where the heart is corrupt, and diminish the power where there is the will to do mischief. This rule seems to extend even to other animals; the little vermin race are ever treacherous, cruel, and cowardly; whilst those endowed with strength and power are generous, brave, and gentle."

"These observations sound well," returned I, "and yet it would be easy this moment to point out a man," and I fixed my eye steadfastly upon him, "whose head and heart form a most detestable contrast. Ay, sir," continued I, raising my voice, "and I am glad to have this opportunity of detecting him in the midst of his fancied security. Do you know this, sir—this pocket-book?" "Yes, sir," returned he, with a face of impenetrable assurance; "that pocket-book is mine, and I am glad you have found it." "And do you know," cried I, "this letter? Nay, never falter, man; but look me full in the face. I say, do you know this letter?" "That letter," replied he; "yes, it was I that wrote that letter." "And how could you," said I, "so basely, so ungratefully, presume to write this letter?" "And how came you," replied he, with looks of unparalleled effrontery, "so basely to presume to break open this letter? Don't you know, now, I could hang you all for this? All that I have to do, is to swear at the next justice's

that you have been guilty of breaking open the lock of my pocket-book, and so hang you all up at his door." This piece of unexpected insolence raised me to such a pitch, that I could scarcely govern my passion. "Ungrateful wretch! begone, and no longer pollute my dwelling with thy baseness. Begone! and never let me see thee again: go from my door, and the only punishment I wish thee is an alarmed conscience, which will be a sufficient tormentor!" So saying, I threw him his pocket-book, which he took up with a smile, and shutting the clasps with the utmost composure, left us quite astonished at the serenity of his assurance. My wife was particularly enraged that nothing could make him angry, or make him seem ashamed of his villanies. "My dear," cried I, willing to calm those passions that had been raised too high among us, "we are not to be surprised that bad men want shame; they only blush at being detected in doing good, but glory in their vices.

"Guilt and Shame (says the allegory) were at first companions, and in the beginning of their journey inseparably kept together. But their union was soon found to be disagreeable and inconvenient to both: Guilt gave Shame frequent uneasiness, and Shame often betrayed the secret conspiracies of Guilt. After long disagreement, therefore, they at length consented to part for ever. Guilt boldly walked forward alone to overtake Fate, that went before in the shape of an executioner; but Shame, being naturally timorous, returned back to keep company with Virtue, which in the beginning of their journey they had left behind. Thus, my children, after men have travelled through a few stages in vice, Shame forsakes them, and returns back to wait upon the few virtues they have still remaining."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE FAMILY USE ART, WHICH IS OPPOSED WITH STILL GREATER.

WHATEVER might have been Sophia's sensations, the rest of the family were easily consoled for Mr. Burchell's absence by the company of our landlord, whose visits now became more frequent and longer. Though he had been disappointed in procuring my daughters the amusements of the town, as he designed, he took every opportunity of supplying them with those little recreations which our retirement would admit of. He usually came in the morning, and while my son and I followed our occupations abroad, he sat with the family at home, and amused them by describing the town, with every part of which he was particularly acquainted. He could repeat all the observations that were retailed in the atmosphere of the playhouses, and had all the good things of the high wits by rote, long before they made their way into the jest-books. The intervals between conversation were employed in teaching my daughters piquet; or, sometimes, in setting my two little ones to box, to make them *sharp*, as he called it: but the hopes of having him for a son-in-law in some measure blinded us to all his imperfections. It must be owned that my wife laid a thousand schemes to entrap him; or, to speak it more tenderly, used every art to magnify the merit of her daughter. If the cakes at tea ate short and crisp, they were made by Olivia; if the gooseberry-wine was well knit, the gooseberries were of her gathering; it was her fingers which gave the pickles their peculiar green; and in the composition of a pudding it was her judgment that mixed the ingredients. Then the poor woman would sometimes tell the Squire that she thought him and Olivia extremely of a size, and would bid both stand up to see which was the tallest. These instances of cunning, which she thought impenetrable, yet which everybody saw through, were very pleasing to our benefactor, who gave every day some new proofs of his passion, which, though they had not arisen to proposals of marriage, yet we thought fell but little short of it: and his slowness was attributed sometimes to native bashfulness, and sometimes to his fear of offending his uncle. An occurrence, however, which happened soon after, put it beyond a doubt that

THE FAMILY SIT FOR THEIR PICTURE.

he designed to become one of our family; my wife even regarded it as an absolute promise.

My wife and daughters, happening to return a visit to neighbour Flamborough's, found that family had lately got their pictures drawn by a limner, who travelled the country, and took likenesses for fifteen shillings a head. As this family and ours had long a sort of rivalry in point of taste, our spirit took the alarm at this stolen march upon us, and notwithstanding all I could say (and I said much), it was resolved that we should have our pictures done too. Having, therefore, engaged the limner (for what could I do?), our next deliberation was to show the superiority of our taste in the attitudes. As for our neighbour's family, there were seven of them, and they were drawn with seven oranges—a thing quite out of taste, no variety in life, no composition in the world. We desired to have something in a brighter style, and, after many debates, at length came to a unanimous resolution of being drawn together, in one large historical family-piece. This would be cheaper, since one frame would serve for all, and it would be infinitely more genteel; for all families of any taste were now drawn in the same manner. As we did not immediately recollect an historical subject to hit us, we were contented each with being drawn as independent historical figures. My wife desired to be represented as Venus, and the painter was requested not to be too frugal of his diamonds in her stomacher and hair. Her two little ones were to be as Cupids by her side; while I, in my gown and band, was to present her with my books on the Whistonian controversy. Olivia would be drawn as an Amazon, sitting upon a bank of flowers, dressed in a green joseph, richly laced with gold, and a whip in her hand. Sophia was to be a shepherdess, with as many sheep as the painter could put in for nothing; and Moses was to be dressed out with a hat and white feather.

Our taste so much pleased the Squire, that he insisted on being put in as one of the family, in the character of Alexander the Great, at Olivia's feet. This was considered by us all as an indication of his desire to be introduced into the family, nor could we refuse his request. The painter was therefore set to work; and, as he wrought with assiduity and expedition, in less than four days the whole was completed. The piece was large, and it must be owned he did not spare his colours; for which my wife gave him great encomiums. We were all perfectly satisfied with his performance; but an unfortunate cir-

cumstance had not occurred till the picture was finished, which now struck us with dismay. It was so very large, that we had no place in the house to fix it. How we all came to disregard so material a point is inconceivable; but certain it is, we had been all greatly remiss. This picture, therefore, instead of gratifying our vanity, as we hoped, leaned in a most mortifying manner against the kitchen wall, where the canvas was stretched and painted, much too large to be got through any of the doors, and the jest of all our neighbours. One compared it to Robinson Crusoe's long-boat, too large to be removed; another thought it more resembled a reel in a bottle; some wondered how it could be got out, but still more were amazed how it ever got in.

But though it excited the ridicule of some, it effectually raised more malicious suggestions in many. The Squire's portrait being found united with ours, was an honour too great to escape envy. Scandalous whispers began to circulate at our expense, and our tranquillity was continually disturbed by persons who came as friends to tell us what was said of us by enemies. These reports were always resented with becoming spirit; but scandal ever improves by opposition.

We once again, therefore, entered into a consultation upon obviating the malice of our enemies, and at last came to a resolution which had too much cunning to give me entire satisfaction. It was this: as our principal object was to discover the honour of Mr. Thornhill's addresses, my wife undertook to sound him, by pretending to ask his advice in the choice of a husband for her eldest daughter. If this was not found sufficient to induce him to a declaration, it was then resolved to terrify him with a rival. To this last step, however, I would by no means give my consent, till Olivia gave me the most solemn assurances that she would marry the person provided to rival him upon this occasion, if he did not prevent it by taking her himself. Such was the scheme laid, which, though I did not strenuously oppose, I did not entirely approve.

The next time, therefore, that Mr. Thornhill came to see us, my girls took care to be out of the way, in order to give their mamma an opportunity of putting her scheme in execution; but they only retired to the next room, from whence they could overhear the whole conversation. My wife artfully introduced it by observing, that one of the Miss Flamboroughs was like to have a very good match of it in Mr. Spanker. To this the Squire assenting, she proceeded to remark that they who had warm fortunes were always sure of getting good husbands: "But

heaven help," continued she, "the girls that have none! What signifies beauty, Mr. Thornhill? or what signifies all the virtue and all the qualifications in the world, in this age of self-interest? It is not, What is she? but, What has she? is all the cry."

"Madam," returned he, "I highly approve the justice, as well as the novelty, of your remarks; and if I were a king, it should be otherwise. It should then, indeed, be fine times for the girls without fortunes; our two young ladies should be the first for whom I would provide."

"Ah! sir," returned my wife, "you are pleased to be facetious: but I wish I were a queen, and then I know where my eldest daughter should look for a husband. But now that you have put it into my head, seriously, Mr. Thornhill, can't you recommend me a proper husband for her? she is now nineteen years old, well grown, and well educated; and, in my humble opinion, does not want for parts."

"Madam," replied he, "if I were to choose, I would find out a person possessed of every accomplishment that can make an angel happy; one with prudence, fortune, taste, and sincerity: such, madam, would be, in my opinion, the proper husband." "Ay, sir," said she, "but do you know of any such person?" "No, madam," returned he; "it is impossible to know any person that deserves to be her husband: she's too great a treasure for one man's possession: she's a goddess. Upon my soul, I speak what I think, she's an angel." "Ah! Mr. Thornhill, you only flatter my poor girl: but we have been thinking of marrying her to one of your tenants, whose mother is lately dead, and who wants a manager; you know whom I mean, Farmer Williams; a warm man, Mr. Thornhill, able to give her good bread; and who has several times made her proposals" (which was actually the case). "But, sir," concluded she, "I should be glad to have your approbation of our choice." "How, madam!" replied he, "my approbation! My approbation of such a choice! Never. What! sacrifice so much beauty, and sense, and goodness, to a creature insensible of the blessing! Excuse me, I can never approve of such a piece of injustice! And I have my reasons——" "Indeed, sir," cried Deborah; "if you have your reasons, that's another affair; but I should be glad to know those reasons." "Excuse me, madam," returned he; "they lie too deep for discovery" (laying his hand upon his bosom); "they remain buried, riveted here."

After he was gone, upon a general consultation, we could not tell what to make of these fine sentiments. Olivia considered them as in-

stances of the most exalted passion; but I was not quite so sanguine: it seemed to me pretty plain that they had more of love than matrimony in them; yet, whatever they might portend, it was resolved to prosecute the scheme of Farmer Williams, who, from my daughter's first appearance in the country, had paid her his addresses.

CHAPTER XVII.

SCARCELY ANY VIRTUE FOUND TO RESIST THE POWER OF LONG AND PLEASING TEMPTATION.

AS I only studied my child's real happiness, the assiduity of Mr. Williams pleased me, as he was in easy circumstances, prudent, and sincere. It required but very little encouragement to revive his former passion; so that in an evening or two he and Mr. Thornhill met at our house, and surveyed each other for

MR. WILLIAMS AND OLIVIA

some time with looks of anger; but Williams owed his landlord no rent, and little regarded his indignation. Olivia, on her side, acted the coquet to perfection, if that might be called acting which was her real character, pretending to lavish all her tenderness on her new lover. Mr. Thornhill appeared quite dejected at this preference, and, with a pensive air, took leave; though I own it puzzled me to find him in so much pain as he appeared to be, when he had it in his power so easily to remove the cause, by declaring an honourable passion. For whatever uneasiness he seemed to endure, it could easily be perceived that Olivia's anguish was still greater. After any of these interviews between her lovers, of which there were several, she usually retired to solitude, and there indulged her grief. It was in such a situation I found her one evening, after she had been for some time supporting a fictitious gaiety. "You now see, my child," said I, "that your confidence in Mr. Thornhill's passion was all a dream; he permits the rivalry of another, every way his inferior, though he knows it lies in his power to secure you to himself by a candid declaration." "Yes, papa," returned she, "but he has his reasons for this delay. I know he has.

The sincerity of his looks and words convinces me of his real esteem. A short time, I hope, will discover the generosity of his sentiments, and convince you that my opinion of him has been more just than yours." "Olivia, my darling," returned I, "every scheme that has been hitherto pursued to compel him to a declaration has been proposed and planned by yourself, nor can you in the least say that I have constrained you. But you must not suppose, my dear, that I will ever be instrumental in suffering his honest rival to be the dupe of your ill-placed passion. Whatever time you require to bring your fancied admirer to an explanation, shall be granted; but at the expiration of that term, if he is still regardless, I must absolutely insist that honest Mr. Williams shall be rewarded for his fidelity. The character which I have hitherto supported in life demands this from me; and my tenderness as a parent shall never influence my integrity as a man. Name, then, your day; let it be as distant as you think proper, and in the meantime take care to let Mr. Thornhill know the exact time on which I design delivering you up to another. If he really loves you, his own good sense will readily suggest that there is but one method alone to prevent his losing you for ever." This proposal, which she could not avoid considering as perfectly just, was readily agreed to. She again renewed her most positive promise of marrying Mr. Williams, in case of the other's insensibility; and at the next opportunity, in Mr. Thornhill's presence, that day month was fixed upon for her nuptials with his rival.

Such vigorous proceedings seemed to redouble Mr. Thornhill's anxiety; but what Olivia really felt gave me some uneasiness. In this struggle between prudence and passion, her vivacity quite forsook her, and every opportunity of solitude was sought, and spent in tears. One week passed away; but Mr. Thornhill made no efforts to restrain her nuptials. The succeeding week he was still assiduous, but not more open. On the third he discontinued his visits entirely; and instead of my daughter testifying any impatience, as I expected, she seemed to retain a pensive tranquillity, which I looked upon as resignation. For my own part, I was now sincerely pleased with thinking that my child was going to be secured in a continuance of competence and peace, and frequently applauded her resolution, in preferring happiness to ostentation.

It was within about four days of her intended nuptials, that my little family at night were gathered round a charming fire, telling stories of the past, and laying schemes for the future; busied in forming a

thousand projects, and laughing at whatever folly came uppermost. "Well, Moses," cried I, "we shall soon, my boy, have a wedding in the family; what is your opinion of matters and things in general?"—"My opinion, father, is, that all things go on very well; and I was just now thinking, that when sister Livy is married to Farmer Williams, we shall then have the loan of his cider-press and brewing-tubs for nothing." "That we shall, Moses," cried I; "and he will sing us *Death and the Lady*, to raise our spirits, into the bargain." "He has taught that song to our Dick," cried Moses; "and I think he goes through it very prettily." "Does he so?" cried I; "then let us have it. Where is little Dick? let him up with it boldly." "My brother Dick," cried Bill, my youngest, "is just gone out with sister Livy; but Mr. Williams has taught me two songs, and I'll sing them for you, papa. Which song do you choose—*The Dying Swan*, or the *Elegy on the Death of a Mad Dog?*" "The elegy, child, by all means," said I; "I never heard that yet; and Deborah, my life, grief, you know, is dry; let us have a bottle of the best gooseberry-wine, to keep up our spirits. I have wept so much at all sorts of elegies of late, that, without an enlivening glass, I am sure this will overcome me. And Sophy, love, take your guitar, and thrum in with the boy a little."

AN ELEGY

ON THE DEATH OF A MAD DOG.

Good people all, of every sort,
Give ear unto my song;
And if you find it wondrous short,
It cannot hold you long.

In Islington there was a man,
Of whom the world might say,
That still a godly race he ran,
Whene'er he went to pray.

A kind and gentle heart he had,
To comfort friends and foes;
The naked every day he clad,
When he put on his clothes.

And in that town a dog was found;
As many dogs there be,
Both mongrel, puppy, whelp, and hound,
And curs of low degree.

This dog and man at first were friends;
But when a pique began,
The dog, to gain some private ends,
Went mad, and bit the man!

Around from all the neighbouring streets
The wondering neighbours ran;
And swore the dog had lost his wits,
To bite so good a man.

The wound it seemed both sore and sad
To every Christian eye;
And while they swore the dog was mad,
They swore the man would die.

But soon a wonder came to light,
That showed the rogues they lied:
The man recovered of the bite,
The dog it was that died.*

* Mr. Cunningham states that these verses had previously appeared in "The Bee." This is an inadvertence, as indeed is evident from his own note (vol. i., p. 105) of Goldsmith's Works. "The Elegy on Mrs. Mary Blaize" was published in "The Bee."

"A very good boy, Bill, upon my word; and an elegy that may truly be called tragical. Come, my children, here's Bill's health, and may he one day be a bishop!"

"With all my heart," cried my wife; "and if he but preaches as well as he sings, I make no doubt of him. The most of his family, by the mother's side, could sing a good song. It was a common saying in our country, that the family of the Blenkinsops could never look straight before them; nor the Hugginsons blow out a candle; that there were none of the Grograms but could sing a song, or of the Marjorams but could tell a story." "However that be," cried I, "the most vulgar ballad of them all generally pleases me better than the fine modern odes, and things that petrify us in a single stanza—productions that we at once detest and praise. Put the glass to your brother, Moses. The great fault of these elegiasts is, that they are in despair for griefs that give the sensible part of mankind very little pain. A lady loses her muff, her fan, or her lap-dog, and so the silly poet runs home to versify the disaster."

"That may be the mode," cried Moses, "in sublimer compositions; but the Ranelagh songs that come down to us are perfectly familiar, and all cast in the same mould. Colin meets Dolly, and they hold a dialogue together; he gives her a fairing to put in her hair, and she presents him with a nosegay; and then they go together to church, where they give good advice to young nymphs and swains to get married as fast as they can."

"And very good advice too," cried I; "and I am told there is not a place in the world where advice can be given with so much propriety as there; for, as it persuades us to marry, it also furnishes us with a wife; and surely that must be an excellent market, my boy, where we are told what we want, and supplied with it when wanting."

"Yes, sir," returned Moses, "and I know but of two such markets for wives in Europe, Ranelagh in England, and Fontarabia in Spain. The Spanish market is open once a year, but our English wives are saleable every night."

"You are right, my boy," cried his mother. "Old England is the only place in the world for husbands to get wives." "And for wives to manage their husbands," interrupted I. "It is a proverb abroad, that if a bridge were built across the sea, all the ladies of the continent would come over to take pattern from ours; for there are no such wives in Europe as our own. But let us have one bottle

THE VICAR'S INDIGNATION.

more, Deborah, my life; and, Moses, give us a good song. What thanks do we not owe to Heaven for thus bestowing tranquillity, health, and competence! I think myself happier now than the greatest monarch upon earth. He has no such fireside, nor such pleasant faces about it. Yes, Deborah, we are now growing old; but the evening of our life is likely to be happy. We are descended from ancestors that knew no stain, and we shall leave a good and virtuous race of children behind us. While we live they will be our support and our pleasure here, and when we die they will transmit our honour untainted to posterity. Come, my son, we wait for a song; let us have a chorus. But where is my darling Olivia? That little cherub's voice is always sweetest in the concert." Just as I spoke, Dick came running in. "Oh, papa, papa, she is gone from us—she is gone from us; my sister Livy is gone from us for ever!" "Gone, child!" "Yes; she is gone off with two gentlemen in a post-chaise, and one of them kissed her, and said he would die for her; and she cried very much, and was for coming back; but he persuaded her again, and she went into the chaise, and said, 'Oh! what will my poor papa do when he knows I am undone.'" "Now, then," cried I, "my children, go and be miserable; for we shall never enjoy one hour more. And oh, may Heaven's everlasting fury light upon him and his! Thus to rob me of my child! And sure it will—for taking back my sweet innocent that I was leading up to heaven! Such sincerity as my child was possessed of! But all our earthly happiness is now over. Go, my children, go and be miserable and infamous—for my heart is broken within me!" "Father," cried my son, "is this your fortitude?" "Fortitude, child! Yes, he shall see I have fortitude—bring me my pistols—I'll pursue the traitor—while he is on earth I'll pursue him! Old as I am, he shall find I can sting him yet—the villain—the perfidious villain!" I had by this time reached down my pistols, when my poor wife, whose passions were not so strong as mine, caught me in her arms. "My dearest, dearest husband," cried she, "the Bible is the only weapon that is fit for your old hands now. Open that, my love, and read our anguish into patience, for she has vilely deceived us." "Indeed, sir," resumed my son, after a pause, "your rage is too violent and unbecoming. You should be my mother's comforter, and you increase her pain. It ill suited you and your reverend character, thus to curse your greatest enemy;—you should not have curst him, villain as he is." "I did not curse him, child, did I?" "Indeed, sir,

you did; you curst him twice." "Then may Heaven forgive me and him if I did. And now, my son, I see it was more than human benevolence that first taught us to bless our enemies. Blest be his holy name for all the good he hath given, and for all that he hath taken away. But it is not—it is not a small distress that can wring tears from these old eyes, that have not wept for so many years. My child—to undo my darling! May confusion seize—Heaven forgive me! what am I about to say? You may remember, my love, how good she was, and how charming; till this vile moment all her care was to make us happy. Had she but died! but she is gone; the honour of our family contaminated, and I must look out for happiness in other worlds than here. But, my child, you saw them go off; perhaps he forced her away? If he forced her, she may yet be innocent." "Ah, no, sir," cried the child; "he only kissed her, and called her his angel, and she wept very much, and leaned upon his arm, and they drove off very fast." "She's an ungrateful creature," cried my wife, who could scarcely speak for weeping, "to use us thus; she never had the least constraint put upon her affections. The vile strumpet has basely deserted her parents without any provocation; thus to bring your grey hairs to the grave, and I must shortly follow."

In this manner that night, the first of our real misfortunes, was spent in the bitterness of complaint, and ill-supported sallies of enthusiasm. I determined, however, to find out our betrayer, wherever he was, and reproach his baseness. The next morning we missed our wretched child at breakfast, where she used to give life and cheerfulness to us all. My wife, as before, attempted to ease her heart by reproaches. "Never," cried she, "shall that vilest stain of our family again darken these harmless doors. I will never call her daughter more. No, let the strumpet live with her vile seducer: she may bring us to shame, but she shall never more deceive us."

"Wife," said I, "do not talk thus hardly: my detestation of her guilt is as great as yours; but ever shall this house and this heart be open to a poor returning repentant sinner. The sooner she returns from her transgression, the more welcome shall she be to me. For the first time the very best may err; art may persuade, and novelty spread out its charm. The first fault is the child of simplicity; but every other the offspring of guilt. Yes, the wretched creature shall be welcome to this heart and this house, though stained with ten thousand vices. I will again hearken to the music of her voice, again will I

hang fondly on her bosom, if I find but repentance there. My son, bring hither my Bible and my staff; I will pursue her, wherever she is; and, though I cannot save her from shame, I may prevent the continuance of iniquity."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE PURSUIT OF A FATHER TO RECLAIM A LOST CHILD TO VIRTUE.

THOUGH the child could not describe the gentleman's person, who handed his sister into the post-chaise, yet my suspicions fell entirely upon our young landlord, whose character for such intrigues was but too well known. I therefore directed my steps towards Thornhill Castle, resolving to upbraid him, and, if possible, to bring back my daughter; but before I had reached his seat I was met by one of my parishioners, who said he saw a young lady resembling my daughter in a post-chaise with a gentleman, whom, by the description, I could only guess to be Mr. Burchell, and that they drove very fast. This information, however, did by no means satisfy me; I therefore went to the young Squire's, and though it was yet early, insisted upon seeing him immediately; he soon appeared with the most open familiar air, and seemed perfectly amazed at my daughter's elopement, protesting upon his honour that he was quite a stranger to it. I now therefore condemned my former suspicions, and could turn them only on Mr. Burchell, who I recollected had of late several private conferences with her; but the appearance of another witness left me no room to doubt of his villany, who averred that he and my daughter were actually gone towards the Wells, about thirty miles off, where there was a great deal of company. Being driven to that state of mind in which we are more ready to act precipitately than to reason right, I never debated with myself, whether these accounts might not have been given by persons purposely placed in my way to mislead me, but resolved to pursue my daughter and her fancied deluder thither. I walked along with earnestness, and inquired of several by the way; but received no accounts, till entering the town I was met by a person on horseback, whom I remembered to have seen

VI

THE VICAR AND THE PLAYERS.

at the Squire's; and he assured me, that if I followed them to the races, which were but thirty miles farther, I might depend upon overtaking them; for he had seen them dance there the night before, and the whole assembly seemed charmed with my daughter's performance. Early the next day I walked forward to the races, and about four in the afternoon I came upon the course. The company made a very brilliant appearance, all earnestly employed in one pursuit, that of pleasure; how different from mine, that of reclaiming a lost child to virtue! I thought I perceived Mr. Burchell at some distance from me; but, as if he dreaded an interview, upon my approaching him he mixed among a crowd, and I saw him no more.

I now reflected that it would be to no purpose to continue my pursuit farther, and resolved to return home to an innocent family, who wanted my assistance. But the agitations of my mind, and the fatigues I had undergone, threw me into a fever, the symptoms of which I perceived before I came off the course. This was another unexpected stroke, as I was more than seventy miles distant from home; however, I retired to a little ale-house by the road-side; and in this place, the

usual retreat of indigence and frugality, I laid me down patiently to wait the issue of my disorder. I languished here for nearly three weeks; but at last my constitution prevailed, though I was unprovided with money to defray the expenses of my entertainment. It is possible the anxiety from this last circumstance alone might have brought on a relapse, had I not been supplied by a traveller who stopped to take a cursory refreshment. This person was no other than the philanthropic bookseller in St. Paul's Churchyard, who has written so many little books for children;* he called himself their friend, but he was the friend of all mankind. He was no sooner alighted, but he was in haste to be gone; for he was ever on business of the utmost importance, and was at that time actually compiling materials for the history of one Mr. Thomas Trip. I immediately recollected this good-natured man's red pimpled face; for he had published for me against the Deuterogamists of the age; and from him I borrowed a few pieces, to be paid at my return. Leaving the inn, therefore, as I was yet but weak, I resolved to return home by easy journeys of ten miles a day.

My health and usual tranquillity were almost restored, and I now condemned that pride which had made me refractory to the hand of correction. Man little knows what calamities are beyond his patience to bear till he tries them: as in ascending the heights of ambition, which look bright from below, every step we rise shows us some new and gloomy prospect of hidden disappointment; so in our descent from the summits of pleasure, though the vale of misery below may appear at first dark and gloomy, yet the busy mind, still attentive to its own amusement, finds, as we descend, something to flatter and to please. Still, as we approach, the darkest objects appear to brighten, and the mental eye becomes adapted to its gloomy situation.

I now proceeded forward, and had walked about two hours, when I perceived what appeared at a distance like a wagon, which I was resolved to overtake; but when I came up with it found it to be a strolling company's cart, that was carrying their scenes and other theatrical furniture to the next village, where they were to exhibit.

The cart was attended only by the person who drove it, and one of the company, as the rest of the players were to follow the ensuing day.

* This was Mr. John Newbery, who published "The British Magazine" in 1760, for which Goldsmith and Smollett were the principal writers. He also started, in the same year, a daily paper, "The Public Ledger," in which "The Citizen of the World" originally appeared. Amongst the children's books published by Newbery, was "Goody Two Shoes," said to have been written by Goldsmith. The poet was in the habit of telling pleasant stories of the bookseller, who, he declared, was the patron of more distressed authors than any man of his time; yet he dishonoured Goldsmith's bill for fifteen guineas when the second edition of "The Vicar of Wakefield" came out.

"Good company upon the road," says the proverb, "is the shortest cut." I therefore entered into conversation with the poor player; and, as I once had some theatrical powers myself, I disserted on such topics with my usual freedom; but as I was pretty much unacquainted with the present state of the stage, I demanded who were the present theatrical writers in vogue, who the Drydens and Otways of the day? "I fancy, sir," cried the player, "few of our modern dramatists would think themselves much honoured by being compared to the writers you mention. Dryden and Rowe's manner, sir, are quite out of fashion; our taste has gone back a whole century; Fletcher, Ben Jonson, and all the plays of Shakespeare are the only things that go down." "How!" cried I, "is it possible the present age can be pleased with that antiquated dialect, that obsolete humour, those over-charged characters, which abound in the works you mention?" "Sir," returned my companion, "the public think nothing about dialect, or humour, or character; for that is none of their business: they only go to be amused, and find themselves happy when they can enjoy a pantomime, under the sanction of Jonson's or Shakespeare's name." "So then, I suppose," cried I, "that our modern dramatists are rather imitators of Shakespeare than nature." "To say the truth," returned my companion, "I don't know that they imitate anything at all; nor indeed does the public require it of them; it is not the composition of the piece, but the number of starts and attitudes that may be introduced into it that elicits applause. I have known a piece, with not one jest in the whole, shrugged into popularity, and another saved by the poet's throwing in a fit of the gripes. No, sir, the works of Congreve and Farquhar have too much wit in them for the present taste; our modern dialect is much more natural."

By this time the equipage of the strolling company was arrived at the village, which, it seems, had been apprised of our approach, and was come out to gaze at us; for my companion observed, that strollers always have more spectators without doors than within. I did not consider the impropriety of my being in such company, till I saw a mob gather about me. I therefore took shelter, as fast as possible, in the first alehouse that offered, and, being shown into the common room, was accosted by a very well-dressed gentleman, who demanded whether I was the real chaplain of the company, or whether it was only to be my masquerade character in the play? Upon informing him of the truth, and that I did not belong in any sort to the company, he was

condescending enough to desire me and the player to partake in a bowl of punch, over which he discussed modern politics with great earnestness and interest. I set him down in my own mind for nothing less than a parliament-man at least; but was almost confirmed in my conjectures, when, upon asking what there was in the house for supper, he insisted that the player and I should sup with him at his house; with which request, after some entreaties, we were prevailed on to comply.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE DESCRIPTION OF A PERSON DISCONTENTED WITH THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT, AND APPREHENSIVE OF THE LOSS OF OUR LIBERTIES.

THE house where we were to be entertained lying at a small distance from the village, our inviter observed, that as the coach was not ready, he would conduct us on foot, and we soon arrived at one of the most magnificent mansions I had seen in that part of the country. The apartment into which we were shown was perfectly elegant and modern; he went to give orders for supper, while the player, with a wink, observed that we were perfectly in luck. Our entertainer soon returned, an elegant supper was brought in, two or three ladies in easy dishabille were introduced, and the conversation began with some sprightliness. Politics, however, were the subject on which our entertainer chiefly expatiated; for he asserted that liberty was at once his boast and his terror. After the cloth was removed, he asked me if I had seen the last "Monitor;" to which replying in the negative, "What! nor the 'Auditor,' I suppose?" cried he. "Neither, sir," returned I. "That's strange, very strange," replied my entertainer. "Now, I read all the politics that come out. The 'Daily,' the 'Public,' the 'Ledger,' the 'Chronicle,' the 'London Evening,' the 'Whitehall Evening,' the seventeen Magazines and the two Reviews; and, though they hate each other, I love them all. Liberty, sir, liberty is the Briton's boast, and, by all my coal-mines in Cornwall, I reverence its guardians." "Then it is to be hoped," cried I, "you reverence the king?" "Yes," returned my entertainer, "when

THE VICAR AND HIS FRIENDS AT SUPPER.

he does what we would have him; but if he goes on as he has done of late, I'll never trouble myself more with his matters. I say nothing, I think only. I could have directed some things better. I don't think there has been a sufficient number of advisers; he should advise with every person willing to give him advice, and then we should have things done in another guess manner."

"I wish," cried I, "that such intruding advisers were fixed in the pillory. It should be the duty of honest men to assist the weaker side of our constitution—that sacred power that has for some years been every day declining, and losing its due share of influence in the state. But these ignorants still continue the cry of liberty, and if they have any weight, basely throw it into the subsiding scale."

"How!" cried one of the ladies, "do I live to see one so base, so sordid, as to be an enemy to liberty, and a defender of tyrants? Liberty, that sacred gift of heaven, that glorious privilege of Britons!"

"Can it be possible," cried our entertainer, "that there should be any found, at present, advocates for slavery? Any who are for meanly giving up the privileges of Britons! Can any, sir, be so abject?"

"No, sir," replied I. "I am for liberty, that attribute of gods! Glorious liberty! that theme of modern declamation. I would have all men kings. I would be a king myself. We have all naturally an equal right to the throne; we are all originally equal. This is my opinion, and was once the opinion of a set of honest men who were called Levellers. They tried to erect themselves into a community, where all should be equally free. But, alas! it would never answer; for there were some among them stronger, and some more cunning than others, and these became masters of the rest; for as sure as your groom rides your horses, because he is a cunninger animal than they, so surely will the animal that is cunninger or stronger than he sit upon his shoulders in turn. Since, then, it is entailed upon humanity to submit, and some are born to command, and others to obey, the question is, as there must be tyrants, whether it is better to have them in the same house with us, or in the same village, or still farther off in the metropolis. Now, sir, for my own part, as I naturally hate the face of a tyrant, the farther off he is removed from me, the better pleased am I. The generality of mankind also are of my way of thinking, and have unanimously created one king, whose election at once diminishes the number of tyrants, and puts tyranny at the greatest distance from the greatest number of people. Now the great, who were tyrants

themselves before the election of one tyrant, are naturally averse to a power raised over them, and whose weight must ever lean heaviest on the subordinate orders. It is the interest of the great, therefore, to diminish kingly power as much as possible; because whatever they take from that is naturally restored to themselves; and all they have to do in the state is to undermine the single tyrant, by which they resume their primæval authority. Now the state may be so circumstanced, or its laws may be so disposed, or its men of opulence so minded, as all to conspire in carrying on this business of undermining monarchy. For, in the first place, if the circumstances of our state be such as to favour the accumulation of wealth, and make the opulent still more rich, this will increase their ambition. An accumulation of wealth, however, must necessarily be the consequence, when, as at present, more riches flow in from external commerce than arise from internal industry; for external commerce can only be managed to advantage by the rich, and they have also at the same time all the emoluments arising from internal industry; so that the rich, with us, have two sources of wealth, whereas the poor have but one. For this reason, wealth in all commercial states is found to accumulate; and all such have hitherto, in time, become aristocratical. Again, the very laws also of this country may contribute to the accumulation of wealth: as when, by their means, the natural ties that bind the rich and poor together are broken; and it is ordained that the rich shall only marry with the rich; or when the learned are held unqualified to serve their country as councillors, merely from a defect of opulence; and wealth is thus made the object of a wise man's ambition; by these means, I say, and such means as these, riches will accumulate. Now the possessor of accumulated wealth, when furnished with the necessaries and pleasures of life, has no other method to employ the superfluity of his fortune, but in purchasing power; that is, differently speaking, in making dependants by purchasing the liberty of the needy, or the venal, of men who are willing to bear the mortification of contiguous tyranny for bread. Thus each very opulent man generally gathers round him a circle of the poorest of the people, and the polity abounding in accumulated wealth may be compared to a Cartesian system, each orb with a vortex of its own. Those, however, who are willing to move in a great man's vortex, are only such as must be slaves, the rabble of mankind, whose souls and whose education are adapted to servitude, and who know nothing of liberty except the name. But there must

still be a large number of the people without the sphere of the opulent man's influence, namely, that order of men which subsists between the very rich and the very rabble; those men who are possessed of too large fortunes to submit to the neighbouring man in power, and yet are too poor to set up for tyranny themselves. In this middle order of mankind are generally to be found all the arts, wisdom, and virtues of society. This order alone is known to be the true preserver of freedom, and may be called the People. Now, it may happen, that this middle order of mankind may lose all its influence in a state, and its voice be in a manner drowned in that of the rabble; for if the fortune sufficient for qualifying a person at present to give his voice in state affairs be ten times less than was judged sufficient upon forming the constitution, it is evident that greater numbers of the rabble will thus be introduced into the political system, and they, ever moving in the vortex of the great, will follow where greatness shall direct. In such a state, therefore, all that the middle order has left is to preserve the prerogative and privileges of the one principal governor with the most sacred circumspection. For he divides the power of the rich, and calls off the great from falling with tenfold weight on the middle order placed beneath them. The middle order may be compared to a town, of which the opulent are forming the siege, and of which the governor from without is hastening the relief. While the besiegers are in dread of an enemy over them, it is but natural to offer the townsmen the most specious terms; to flatter them with sounds, and to amuse them with privileges; but if they once defeat the governor from behind, the walls of the town will be but a small defence to its inhabitants. What they may then expect may be seen by turning our eyes to Holland, Genoa, or Venice, where the laws govern the poor, and the rich govern the law. I am then for, and would die for monarchy, sacred monarchy; for if there be anything sacred amongst men, it must be the anointed *sovereign* of his people; and every diminution of his power, in war or peace, is an infringement upon the real liberties of the subject. The sounds of liberty, patriotism, and Britons have already done much; it is to be hoped that the true sons of freedom will prevent their ever doing more. I have known many of these pretended champions of liberty in my time, yet do I not remember one that was not in his heart and in his family a tyrant."

My warmth, I found, had lengthened this harangue beyond the rules of good breeding; but the impatience of my entertainer, who often

AN EVENING'S ENTERTAINMENT INTERRUPTED.

strove to interrupt it, could be restrained no longer. "What!" cried he, "then I have been all this while entertaining a Jesuit in parson's clothes? but, by all the coal-mines of Cornwall, out he shall pack, if my name be Wilkinson." I now found I had gone too far, and asked pardon for the warmth with which I had spoken. "Pardon!" returned he, in a fury; "I think such principles demand ten thousand pardons. What! give up liberty, property, and, as the 'Gazetteer' says, lie down to be saddled with wooden shoes! Sir, I insist upon your marching out of this house immediately, to prevent worse consequences. Sir, I insist upon it." I was going to repeat my remonstrances; but just then we heard a footman's rap at the door, and the two ladies cried out, "As sure as death, there is our master and mistress come home!" It seems my entertainer was all this while only the butler, who, in his master's absence, had a mind to cut a figure, and be for a while the gentleman himself; and, to say the truth, he talked politics as well as most country gentlemen do. But nothing could now exceed my confusion upon seeing the gentleman and his lady enter; nor was their surprise, at finding such company and good cheer, less than ours. "Gentlemen," cried the real master of the house to me and my companion, "my wife and I are your most humble servants; but I protest this is so unexpected a favour, that we almost sink under the obligation." However unexpected our company might be to them, theirs, I am sure, was still more so to us, and I was struck dumb with the apprehensions of my own absurdity, when, whom should I next see enter the room but my dear Miss Arabella Wilmot, who was formerly designed to be married to my son George; but whose match was broken off, as already related! As soon as she saw me, she flew to my arms with the utmost joy. "My dear sir," cried she, "to what happy accident is it that we owe so unexpected a visit? I am sure my uncle and aunt will be in raptures when they find they have got the good Doctor Primrose for their guest." Upon hearing my name the old gentleman and lady very politely stepped up, and welcomed me with most cordial hospitality. Nor could they forbear smiling on being informed of the nature of my present visit; but the unfortunate butler, whom they at first seemed disposed to turn away, was at my intercession forgiven.

Mr. Arnold and his lady, to whom the house belonged, now insisted upon having the pleasure of my stay for some days; and as their niece, my charming pupil, whose mind, in some measure, had been formed under my own instructions, joined in their entreaties, I complied.

That night I was shown to a magnificent chamber, and the next morning, early, Miss Wilmot desired to walk with me in the garden, which was decorated in the modern manner. After some time spent in pointing out the beauties of the place, she inquired, with seeming unconcern, when last I had heard from my son George. "Alas! madam," cried I, "he has now been nearly three years absent, without ever writing to his friends or me. Where he is, I know not; perhaps I shall never see him or happiness more. No, my dear madam, we shall never more see such pleasing hours as were once spent by our fireside at Wakefield. My little family are now dispersing very fast, and poverty has brought not only want but infamy upon us." The good-natured girl let fall a tear at this account; but as I saw her possessed of too much sensibility, I forbore a more minute detail of our sufferings. It was, however, some consolation to me to find that time had made no alteration in her affections, and that she had rejected several offers that had been made her since our leaving her part of the country. She led me round all the extensive improvements of the place, pointing to the several walks and arbours, and at the same time catching from every object a hint for some new question relative to my son. In this manner we spent the forenoon, till the bell summoned us in to dinner, where we found the manager of the strolling company that I mentioned before, who was come to dispose of tickets for the "Fair Penitent," which was to be acted that evening; the part of "Horatio" by a young gentleman who had never appeared on any stage. He seemed to be very warm in the praise of the new performer, and averred that he never saw any one who bade so fair for excellence. Acting, he observed, was not learned in a day; "but this gentleman," continued he, "seems born to tread the stage. His voice, his figure, and attitudes are all admirable. We caught him up accidentally, in our journey down." This account in some measure excited our curiosity, and, at the entreaty of the ladies, I was prevailed upon to accompany them to the play-house, which was no other than a barn. As the company with which I went was incontestably the chief of the place, we were received with the greatest respect, and placed in the front seat of the theatre; where we sat for some time with no small impatience to see "Horatio" make his appearance. The new performer advanced at last; and let parents think of my sensations by their own, when I found it was my unfortunate son! He was going to begin; when, turning his eyes upon the audience, he per-

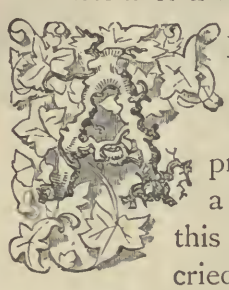
ceived Miss Wilmot and me, and stood at once speechless and immovable.

The actors behind the scenes, who ascribed this pause to his natural timidity, attempted to encourage him; but instead of going on, he burst into a flood of tears and retired off the stage. I don't know what were my feelings on this occasion, for they succeeded with too much rapidity for description; but I was soon awaked from this disagreeable reverie by Miss Wilmot, who, pale and with a trembling voice, desired me to conduct her back to her uncle's. When got home, Mr. Arnold, who was as yet a stranger to our extraordinary behaviour, being informed that the new performer was my son, sent his coach, and an invitation for him; and, as he persisted in his refusal to appear again upon the stage, the players put another in his place, and we soon had him with us. Mr. Arnold gave him the kindest reception, and I received him with my usual transport; for I could never counterfeit false resentment. Miss Wilmot's reception was mixed with seeming neglect, and yet I could perceive she acted a studied part. The tumult in her mind seemed not yet abated; she said twenty giddy things that looked like joy, and then laughed loud at her own want of meaning. At intervals she would take a sly peep at the glass, as if happy in the consciousness of unresisted beauty; and often would ask questions, without giving any manner of attention to the answers.

HORATIO

CHAPTER XX.*

THE HISTORY OF A PHILOSOPHIC VAGABOND PURSUING NOVELTY, BUT LOSING CONTENT.



FTER we had supped, Mrs. Arnold politely offered to send a couple of her footmen for my son's baggage, which he at first seemed to decline; but, upon her pressing the request, he was obliged to inform her, that a stick and a wallet were all the movable things upon this earth that he could boast of. "Why, ay, my son," cried I, "you left me but poor; and poor, I find, you are come back, and yet, I make no doubt, you have seen a great deal of the world." "Yes, sir," replied my son; "but travelling after fortune is not the way to secure her; and, indeed, of late, I have desisted from the pursuit." "I fancy, sir," cried Mrs. Arnold, "that the account of your adventures would be amusing; the first part of them I have often heard from my niece; but could the company prevail for the rest, it would be an additional obligation." "Madam," replied my son, "I promise you the pleasure you have in hearing will not be half so great as my vanity in repeating them; and yet in the whole narrative I can scarce promise you one adventure, as my account is rather of what I saw than what I did. The first misfortune of my life, which you all know, was great; but though it distressed it could not sink me. No person ever had a better knack at hoping than I. The less kind I found Fortune at one time, the more I expected from her another; and being now at the bottom of her wheel, every new revolution might lift, but could not depress me. I proceeded, therefore, towards London in a fine morning, no way uneasy about to-morrow, but cheerful as the birds that carolled by the road; and comforted myself with reflecting, that London was the mart where abilities of every kind were sure of meeting distinction and reward.

"Upon my arrival in town, sir, my first care was to deliver your letter of recommendation to our cousin, who was himself in little better circumstances than I. My first scheme, you know, sir, was to be usher at an academy, and I asked his advice on the affair. Our cousin received the proposal with a true Sardonic grin. 'Ay,' cried he, 'this

* The incidents in this chapter are no fictions. The experiences of his tutor-life at Peckham, his Continental wanderings, and his literary struggles, are here recorded by Goldsmith. "It was the common talk at the dinner table of Reynolds," says Mr. Forster, "that the wanderings of the Philosophic Vagabond in the 'Vicar of Wakefield' had been suggested by his own, and he often admitted at that time, to various friends, the accuracy of special details."

is, indeed, a very pretty career that has been chalked out for you. I have been an usher at a boarding-school myself; and may I die by an anodyne necklace, but I had rather be an under-turnkey in Newgate. I was up early and late. I was brow-beat by the master, hated for my ugly face by the mistress, worried by the boys within, and never permitted to stir out to meet civility abroad. But are you sure you are fit for a school? Let me examine you a little. Have you been bred apprentice to the business?' 'No.' 'Then you won't do for a school. Can you dress the boys' hair?' 'No.' 'Then you won't do for a school. Have you had the small-pox?' 'No.' 'Then you won't do for a school. Can you lie three in a bed?' 'No.' 'Then you will never do for a school. Have you got a good stomach?' 'Yes.' 'Then you will by no means do for a school. No, sir; if you are for a genteel, easy profession, bind yourself seven years as an apprentice to turn a cutler's wheel; but avoid a school by any means. Yet come,' continued he, 'I see you are a lad of spirit and some learning; what do you think of commencing author like me? You have read in books, no doubt, of men of genius starving at the trade; at present I'll show you forty very dull fellows about town that live by it in opulence. All honest jog-trot men, who go on smoothly and dully, and write history and politics, and are praised; men, sir, who, had they been bred cobblers, would all their lives have only mended shoes, but never made them.'

"Finding that there was no great degree of gentility affixed to the character of an usher, I resolved to accept his proposal; and, having the highest respect for literature, hailed the Antiqua Mater of Grub Street with reverence. I thought it my glory to pursue a track which Dryden and Otway trod before me. I considered the goddess of this region as the parent of excellence; and, however an intercourse with the world might give us good sense, the poverty she granted I supposed to be the nurse of genius. Big with these reflections I sat down, and, finding that the best things remained to be said on the wrong side, I resolved to write a book that should be wholly new. I therefore dressed up some paradoxes with ingenuity. They were false, indeed, but they were new. The jewels of truth have been so often imported by others, that nothing was left for me to import but some splendid things that, at a distance, looked every bit as well. Witness, you powers, what fancied importance sat perched upon my quill while I was writing! The whole learned world, I made no doubt,

would rise to oppose my systems; but then I was prepared to oppose the whole learned world. Like the porcupine, I sat self-collected, with a quill pointed against every opposer."

"Well said, my boy," cried I; "and what subject did you treat upon? I hope you did not pass over the importance of monogamy. But I interrupt: go on. You published your paradoxes; well, and what did the learned world say to your paradoxes?"

"Sir," replied my son, "the learned world said nothing to my paradoxes; nothing at all, sir. Every man of them was employed in praising his friends and himself, or condemning his enemies; and, unfortunately, as I had neither, I suffered the cruelest mortification—neglect.

"As I was meditating one day, in a coffee-house, on the fate of my paradoxes, a little man happening to enter the room, placed himself in the box before me; and, after some preliminary discourse, finding me to be a scholar, drew out a bundle of proposals, begging me to subscribe to a new edition he was going to give the world of Propertius, with notes. This demand necessarily produced a reply, that I had no money; and that concession led him to inquire into the nature of my expectations. Finding that my expectations were just as great as my purse, 'I see,' cried he, 'you are unacquainted with the town. I'll teach you a part of it. Look at these proposals; upon these very proposals I have subsisted very comfortably for twelve years. The moment a nobleman returns from his travels, a Creolian arrives from Jamaica, or dowager from her country-seat, I strike for a subscription. I first besiege their hearts with flattery, and then pour in my proposals at the breach. If they subscribe readily the first time, I renew my request to beg a dedication fee; if they let me have that, I smite them once more for engraving their coat of arms at the top. Thus,' continued he, 'I live by vanity and laugh at it; but, between ourselves, I am now too well known. I should be glad to borrow your face a bit; a nobleman of distinction has just returned from Italy; my face is familiar to his porter; but if you bring this copy of verses, my life for it, you succeed, and we divide the spoil.'"

"Bless us, George!" cried I, "and is this the employment of poets now? Do men of their exalted talents thus stoop to beggary? Can they so far disgrace their calling as to make a vile traffic of praise for bread?"

"O no, sir," returned he; "a true poet can never be so base; for,

A PHILOSOPHIC VAGABOND.

wherever there is genius there is pride. The creatures I now describe are only beggars in rhyme. The real poet, as he braves every hardship for fame, so is he equally a coward to contempt; and none but those who are unworthy protection condescend to solicit it.

"Having a mind too proud to stoop to such indignities, and yet a fortune too humble to hazard a second attempt for fame, I was now obliged to take a middle course, and write for bread; but I was unqualified for a profession where mere industry alone was to insure success. I could not suppress my lurking passion for applause; but usually consumed that time in efforts after excellence, which takes up but little room, when it should have been more advantageously employed in the diffusive productions of fruitful mediocrity. My little piece would, therefore, come forth in the midst of periodical publications, unnoticed and unknown. The public were more importantly employed than to observe the easy simplicity of my style, or the harmony of my periods. Sheet after sheet was thrown off to oblivion. My essays were buried among the essays upon liberty, eastern tales, and cures for the bite of a mad dog; while Philautos, Philalethes, and Philelutheros,

and Philanthropos, all wrote better, because they wrote faster than I.

"Now, therefore, I began to associate with none but disappointed authors like myself, who praised, deplored, and despised each other. The satisfaction we found in every celebrated writer's attempts was inversely as their merits. I found that no genius in another could please me. My unfortunate paradoxes had entirely dried up that source of comfort. I could neither read nor write with satisfaction; for excellence in another was my aversion, and writing was my trade.

"In the midst of these gloomy reflections, as I was one day sitting on a bench in St. James's Park, a young gentleman of distinction, who had been my intimate acquaintance at the university, approached me. We saluted each other with some hesitation; he almost ashamed to be known to one who made so shabby an appearance, and I afraid of a repulse. But my suspicions soon vanished; for Ned Thornhill was at the bottom a very good-natured fellow."

"What did you say, George?" interrupted I. "Thornhill! was not that his name? It can certainly be no other than my landlord.' "Bless me!" cried Mrs. Arnold, "is Mr. Thornhill so near a neighbour of yours? He has long been a friend in our family, and we expect a visit from him shortly."

"My friend's first care," continued my son, "was to alter my appearance by a very fine suit of his own clothes, and then I was admitted to his table upon the footing of half friend, half underling. My business was to attend him at auctions, to put him in spirits when he sat for his picture, to take the left hand in his chariot when not filled by another, and to assist at tattering a kip, as the phrase was, when he had a mind for a frolic. Besides this, I had twenty other little employments in the family. I was to do many small things without bidding; to carry the corkscrew; to stand godfather to all the butler's children; to sing when I was bid; to be never out of humour; always to be humble; and, if I could, to be very happy.

"In this honourable post, however, I was not without a rival. A captain of marines, who was formed for the place by nature, opposed me in my patron's affections. His mother had been laundress to a man of quality, and thus he early acquired a taste for pimping and pedigree. As this gentleman made it the study of his life to be acquainted with lords, though he was dismissed from several for his stupidity, yet he found many of them who were as dull as himself, that

permitted his assiduities. As flattery was his trade, he practised it with the easiest address imaginable; but it came awkward and stiff from me; and as every day my patron's desire of flattery increased, so every hour being better acquainted with his defects, I became more unwilling to give it. Thus I was once more fairly going to give up the field to the captain, when my friend found occasion for my assistance. This was nothing less than to fight a duel for him with a gentleman, whose sister it was pretended he had used ill. I readily complied with his request, and though I see you are displeased at my conduct, yet, as it was a debt indispensably due to friendship, I could not refuse. I undertook the affair, disarmed my antagonist, and soon after had the pleasure of finding that the lady was only a woman of the town, and the fellow her bully and a sharper. This piece of service was repaid with the warmest professions of gratitude; but as my friend was to leave town in a few days, he knew no other method of serving me, but by recommending me to his uncle, Sir William Thornhill, and another nobleman of great distinction, who enjoyed a post under the government. When he was gone, my first care was to carry his recommendatory letter to his uncle, a man whose character for every virtue was universal, yet just. I was received by his servants with the most hospitable smiles, for the looks of the domestics ever transmit their master's benevolence. Being shown into a grand apartment, where Sir William soon came to me, I delivered my message and letter, which he read, and after pausing some minutes —'Pray, sir,' cried he, 'inform me what you have done for my kinsman, to deserve this warm recommendation? But I suppose, sir, I guess your merits; you have fought for him; and so you would expect a reward from me for being the instrument of his vices. I wish, sincerely wish, that my present refusal may be some punishment for your guilt; but still more that it may be some inducement to your repentance.' The severity of this rebuke I bore patiently, because I knew it was just. My whole expectations now, therefore, lay in my letter to the great man. As the doors of the nobility are almost ever beset with beggars, all ready to thrust in some sly petition, I found it no easy matter to gain admittance. However, after bribing the servants with half my worldly fortune, I was at last shown into a spacious apartment, my letter being previously sent up for his lordship's inspection. During this anxious interval, I had full time to look around me. Everything was grand and of happy contrivance; the paintings

the furniture, the gildings, petrified me with awe, and raised my idea of the owner. Ah! thought I to myself, how very great must the possessor of all these things be, who carries in his head the business of the state, and whose house displays half the wealth of a kingdom; sure his genius must be unfathomable! During these awful reflections I heard a step come heavily forward. Ah, this is the great man himself! No, it was only a chambermaid. Another foot was heard soon after. This must be he! No, it was only the great man's valet-de-chambre. At last his lordship actually made his appearance. 'Are you,' cried he, 'the bearer of this here letter?' I answered with a bow. 'I learn by this,' continued he, 'as how that——' But just at that instant a servant delivered him a card; and without taking further notice he went out of the room, and left me to digest my own happiness at leisure. I saw no more of him, till told by a footman that his lordship was going to his coach at the door. Down I immediately followed, and joined my voice to that of three or four more, who came like me to petition for favours. His lordship, however, went too fast for us, and was gaining his chariot-door with large strides, when I hallooed out to know if I was to have any reply. He was by this time got in, and muttered an answer, half of which only I heard, the other half was lost in the rattling of his chariot-wheels. I stood for some time with my neck stretched out, in the posture of one that was listening to catch the glorious sounds, till, looking round me, I found myself alone at his lordship's gate.

"My patience," continued my son, "was now quite exhausted. Stung with the thousand indignities I had met with, I was willing to cast myself away, and only wanted the gulf to receive me. I regarded myself as one of those vile things that Nature designed should be thrown by into her lumber-room, there to perish in obscurity. I had still, however, half a guinea left, and of that I thought Nature herself should not deprive me; but, in order to be sure of this, I was resolved to go instantly and spend it while I had it, and then trust to occurrences for the rest. As I was going along with this resolution, it happened that Mr. Crispe's office seemed invitingly open to give me a welcome reception. In this office Mr. Crispe kindly offers all his majesty's subjects a generous promise of £30 a-year, for which promise all they give in return is their liberty for life, and permission to let him transport them to America as slaves. I was happy at finding a place where I could lose my fears in desperation, and entered this cell, for it

SCENE IN ST. JAMES' PARK.

had the appearance of one, with the devotion of a monastic. Here I found a number of poor creatures, all in circumstances like myself, expecting the arrival of Mr. Crispe, presenting a true epitome of English impatience. Each untractable soul, at variance with Fortune, wreaked her injuries on their own hearts; but Mr. Crispe at last came down, and all our murmurs were hushed. He deigned to regard me with an air of peculiar approbation, and indeed he was the first man who, for a month past, talked to me with smiles. After a few questions, he found I was fit for everything in the world. He paused awhile upon the properest means of providing for me, and slapping his forehead as if he had found it, assured me that there was at that time an embassy talked of from the synod of Pennsylvania to the Chickasaw Indians, and that he would use his interest to get me made secretary. I knew in my own heart that the fellow lied, and yet his promise gave me pleasure, there was something so magnificent in the sound. I fairly, therefore, divided my half-guinea, one-half of which went to be added to his thirty thousand pounds, and with the

other half I resolved to go to the next tavern, to be there more happy than he.

"As I was going out with that resolution, I was met at the door by the captain of a ship, with whom I had formerly some little acquaintance, and he agreed to be my companion over a bowl of punch. As I never chose to make a secret of my circumstances, he assured me that I was upon the very point of ruin, in listening to the office-keeper's promises; for that he only designed to sell me to the plantations. 'But,' continued he, 'I fancy you might by a much shorter voyage be very easily put into a genteel way of bread. Take my advice. My ship sails to-morrow for Amsterdam; what if you go in her as a passenger? The moment you land, all you have to do is to teach the Dutchmen English, and I warrant you'll get pupils and money enough. I suppose you understand English,' added he, 'by this time, or the deuce is in it.' I confidently assured him of that; but expressed a doubt whether the Dutch would be willing to learn English. He affirmed, with an oath, that they were fond of it to distraction; and upon that affirmation I agreed with his proposal, and embarked the next day to teach the Dutch English in Holland. The wind was fair, our voyage short, and, after having paid my passage with half my moveables, I found myself fallen, as from the skies, a stranger in one of the principal streets of Amsterdam. In this situation I was unwilling to let any time pass unemployed in teaching. I addressed myself, therefore, to two or three of those I met, whose appearance seemed most promising; but it was impossible to make ourselves mutually understood. It was not till this very moment I recollected, that in order to teach Dutchmen English, it was necessary that they should first teach me Dutch. How I came to overlook so obvious an objection, is to me amazing; but certain it is I overlooked it.

"This scheme thus blown up, I had some thoughts of fairly shipping back to England again; but falling into company with an Irish student, who was returning from Louvain, our conversation turning upon topics of literature (for by the way, it may be observed, that I always forgot the meanness of my circumstances when I could converse on such subjects), from him I learned, that there were not two men in his whole university who understood Greek. This amazed me. I instantly resolved to travel to Louvain, and there live by teaching Greek; and in this design I was heartened by my brother-student, who threw out some hints that a fortune might be got by it.

"I set boldly forward the next morning. Every day lessened the burthen of my moveables, like Æsop and his basket of bread; for I paid them for my lodgings to the Dutch as I travelled on. When I came to Louvain, I was resolved not to go sneaking to the lower professors, but openly tendered my talents to the principal himself. I went, had admittance, and offered him my service as a master of the Greek language, which I had been told was a desideratum in this university. The principal seemed, at first, to doubt of my abilities; but of these I offered to convince him, by turning a part of any Greek author he should fix upon into Latin. Finding me perfectly earnest in my proposal, he addressed me thus: 'You see me, young man; I never learned Greek, and I don't find that I have ever missed it. I have had a doctor's cap and gown without Greek; I have ten thousand florins a year without Greek; I eat heartily without Greek; and, in short,' continued he, 'as I don't know Greek, I do not believe there is any good in it.'

"I was now too far from home to think of returning, so I resolved to go forward. I had some knowledge of music, with a tolerable voice; I now turned what was once my amusement into a present means of subsistence. I passed among the harmless peasants of Flanders, and among such of the French as were poor enough to be very merry; for I ever found them sprightly in proportion to their wants. Whenever I approached a peasant's house towards nightfall, I played one of my most merry tunes, and that procured me not only a lodging, but subsistence for the next day. I once or twice attempted to play for people of fashion; but they always thought my performance odious, and never rewarded me even with a trifle. This was to me the more extraordinary, as whenever I used in better days to play for company, when playing was my amusement, my music never failed to throw them into raptures, and the ladies especially; but, as it was now my only means, it was received with contempt: a proof how ready the world is to underrate those talents by which a man is supported.

"In this manner I proceeded to Paris, with no design but just to look about me, and then to go forward. The people of Paris are much fonder of strangers that have money, than of those that have wit. As I could not boast much of either, I was no great favourite. After walking about the town four or five days, and seeing the outsides of the best houses, I was preparing to leave this retreat of venal hospitality; when, passing through one of the principal streets, whom should

I meet but our cousin, to whom you first recommended me! This meeting was very agreeable to me, and I believe not displeasing to him. He inquired into the nature of my journey to Paris, and informed me of his own business there, which was to collect pictures, medals, intaglios, and antiques of all kinds, for a gentleman in London, who had just stepped into taste and a large fortune. I was the more surprised at seeing our cousin pitched upon for this office, as he himself had often assured me he knew nothing of the matter. Upon asking how he had been taught the art of a *cognoscento* so very suddenly, he assured me that nothing was more easy. The whole secret consisted in a strict adherence to two rules: the one, always to observe that the picture might have been better if the painter had taken more pains; and the other, to praise the works of Pietro Perugino. 'But,' says he, 'as I once taught you how to be an author in London, I'll now undertake to instruct you in the art of picture-buying in Paris.'

"With this proposal I very readily closed, as it was living; and now all my ambition was to live. I went therefore to his lodgings, improved my dress by his assistance; and, after some time, accompanied him to auctions of pictures, where the English gentry were expected to be purchasers. I was not a little surprised at his intimacy with people of the best fashion, who referred themselves to his judgment upon every picture or medal, as an unerring standard of taste. He made very good use of my assistance upon these occasions; for when asked his opinion, he would gravely take me aside and ask mine, shrug, look wise, return, and assure the company that he could give no opinion upon an affair of so much importance. Yet there was sometimes an occasion for a more supported assurance. I remember to have seen him, after giving his opinion that the colouring of a picture was not mellow enough, very deliberately take a brush with brown varnish that was accidentally lying by, and rub it over the piece with great composure before all the company, and then ask if he had not improved the tints.

"When he had finished his commission in Paris, he left me strongly recommended to several men of distinction, as a person very proper for a travelling tutor; and, after some time, I was employed in that capacity by a gentleman who brought his ward to Paris, in order to set him forward on his tour through Europe. I was to be the young gentleman's governor, but with a proviso that he should always

be permitted to govern himself. My pupil, in fact, understood the art of guiding in money concerns much better than I. He was heir to a fortune of about two hundred thousand pounds, left him by an uncle in the West Indies; and his guardians, to qualify him for the management of it, had bound him apprentice to an attorney. Thus avarice was his prevailing passion: all his questions on the road were, how much money might be saved; which was the least expensive course of travelling; whether anything could be bought that would turn to account when disposed of again in London. Such curiosities on the way as could be seen for nothing, he was ready enough to look at; but if the sight of them was to be paid for, he usually asserted that he had been told they were not worth seeing. He never paid a bill that he would not observe, how amazingly expensive travelling was! and all this though he was not yet twenty-one. When arrived at Leghorn, as we took a walk to look at the port and shipping, he inquired the expense of the passage by sea home to England. This he was informed was but a trifle compared to his returning by land: he was therefore unable to withstand the temptation; so paying me the small part of my salary that was due, he took leave, and embarked with only one attendant for London.

"I now, therefore, was left once more upon the world at large; but then it was a thing I was used to. However, my skill in music could avail me nothing in a country where every peasant was a better musician than I; but by this time I had acquired another talent, which answered my purpose as well, and this was a skill in disputation. In all the foreign universities and convents, there are, upon certain days, philosophical theses maintained against every adventitious disputant; for which, if the champion opposes with any dexterity, he can claim a gratuity in money, a dinner, and a bed for one night. In this manner, therefore, I fought my way towards England; walked along from city to city; examined mankind more nearly; and, if I may so express it, saw both sides of the picture. My remarks, however, are but few; I found that monarchy was the best government for the poor to live in, and commonwealths for the rich. I found that riches in general were in every country another name for freedom; and that no man is so fond of liberty himself as not to be desirous of subjecting the will of some individuals in society to his own.

"Upon my arrival in England, I resolved to pay my respects first to you, and then to enlist as a volunteer in the first expedition that was

going forward; but on my journey down my resolutions were changed by meeting an old acquaintance, who I found belonged to a company of comedians that were going to make a summer campaign in the country. The company seemed not much to disapprove of me for an associate. They all, however, apprised me of the importance of the task at which I aimed; that the public was a many-headed monster, and that only such as had very good heads could please it; that acting was not to be learnt in a day; and that without some traditional shrugs which had been on the stage, and only on the stage, these hundred years, I could never pretend to please. The next difficulty was in fitting me with parts, as almost every character was in keeping. I was driven for some time from one character to another, till at last Horatio was fixed upon, which the presence of the present company has happily hindered me from acting."

CHAPTER XXI.

THE SHORT CONTINUANCE OF FRIENDSHIP AMONG THE VICIOUS, WHICH IS COEVAL ONLY WITH MUTUAL SATISFACTION.

MY son's account was too long to be delivered at once; the first part of it was begun that night, and he was concluding the rest after dinner the next day, when the appearance of Mr. Thornhill's equipage at the door seemed to make a pause in the general satisfaction. The butler, who was now become my friend in the family, informed me, in a whisper, that the Squire had already made some overtures to Miss Wilmot, and that her aunt and uncle seemed highly to approve the match. Upon Mr. Thornhill's entering, he seemed, at seeing my son and me, to start back; but I readily imputed that to surprise, and not displeasure. However, upon our advancing to salute him, he returned our greeting with the most apparent candour; and after a short time his presence served only to increase the general good humour.

After tea, he called me aside, to inquire after my daughter; but upon my informing him that my inquiry was unsuccessful, he seemed greatly surprised; adding that he had been since frequently at my house,

in order to comfort the rest of my family, whom he left perfectly well. He then asked if I had communicated her misfortune to Miss Wilmot, or my son; and upon my replying that I had not told them as yet, he greatly approved my prudence and precaution, desiring me by all means to keep it a secret; "for at best," cried he, "it is but divulging one's own infamy; and perhaps Miss Livy may not be so guilty as we all imagine." We were here interrupted by a servant, who came to ask the Squire in to stand up at country-dances; so that he left me quite pleased with the interest he seemed to take in my concerns. His addresses, however, to Miss Wilmot were too obvious to be mistaken; and yet she seemed not perfectly pleased, but bore them rather in compliance to the will of her aunt, than from real inclination. I had even the satisfaction to see her lavish some kind looks upon my unfortunate son, which the other could neither extort by his fortune nor assiduity. Mr. Thornhill's seeming composure, however, not a little surprised me: we had now continued here a week, at the pressing instances of Mr. Arnold; but each day the more tenderness Miss Wilmot showed my son, Mr. Thornhill's friendship seemed proportionably to increase for him.

He had formerly made us the most kind assurances of using his interest to serve the family; but now his generosity was not confined to promises alone. The morning I designed for my departure Mr. Thornhill came to me, with looks of real pleasure, to inform me of a piece of service he had done for his friend George. This was nothing less than his having procured him an ensign's commission in one of the regiments that were going to the West Indies, for which he had promised but one hundred pounds, his interest having been sufficient to get an abatement of the other two: "As for this trifling piece of service," continued the young gentleman, "I desire no other reward but the pleasure of having served my friend; and as for the hundred pounds to be paid, if you are unable to raise it yourselves, I will advance it, and you shall repay me at your leisure." This was a favour we wanted words to express our sense of: I readily, therefore, gave my bond for the money, and testified as much gratitude as if I never intended to pay.

George was to depart for town the next day to secure his commission, in pursuance of his generous patron's directions, who judged it highly expedient to use dispatch, lest in the meantime another should step in with more advantageous proposals. The next morning,

therefore, our young soldier was early prepared for his departure, and seemed the only person among us that was not affected by it. Neither the fatigues and dangers he was going to encounter, nor the friends and mistress (for Miss Wilmot actually loved him) he was leaving behind, any way damped his spirits. After he had taken leave of the rest of the company, I gave him all I had—my blessing: "And now, my boy," cried I, "thou art going to fight for thy country, remember how thy brave grandfather fought for his sacred king, when loyalty among Britons was a virtue. Go, my boy, and imitate him in all but his misfortunes; if it was a misfortune to die with Lord Falkland. Go, my boy, and if you fall, though distant, exposed and unwept by those that love you, the most precious tears are those with which Heaven bedews the unburied head of a soldier."

The next morning I took leave of the good family that had been kind enough to entertain me so long, not without several expressions of gratitude to Mr. Thornhill for his late bounty. I left them in the enjoyment of all that happiness which affluence and good breeding procure, and returned towards home, despairing of ever finding my

THE WANDERER RESTORED.

daughter more, but sending a sigh to Heaven to spare and to forgive her. I was now come within about twenty miles of home, having hired a horse to carry me, as I was yet but weak, and comforted myself with the hopes of soon seeing all I held dearest upon earth. But the night coming on, I put up at a little public-house by the road-side, and asked for the landlord's company over a pint of wine. We sat beside his kitchen fire, which was the best room in the house, and chatted on politics and the news of the country. We happened, among other topics, to talk of young squire Thornhill, who, the host assured me, was hated as much as his uncle, Sir William, who sometimes came down to the country, was loved. He went on to observe, that he made it his whole study to betray the daughters of such as received him to their houses, and after a fortnight or three weeks' possession turned them out unrewarded and abandoned to the world. As we continued our discourse in this manner, his wife, who had been out to get change, returned, and perceiving that her husband was enjoying a pleasure in which she was not a sharer, she asked him, in an angry tone, what he did there, to which he only replied, in an ironical way, by drinking her health. "Mr. Symonds," cried she, "you use me very ill, and I'll bear it no longer. Here, three-parts of the business is left for me to do, and the fourth left unfinished, while you do nothing but soak with the guests all day long; whereas, if a spoonful of liquor were to cure me of a fever, I never touch a drop." I now found what she would be at, and immediately poured her out a glass, which she received with a curtsey, and drinking towards my good health, "Sir," resumed she, "it is not so much for the value of the liquor I am angry, but one cannot help it when the house is going out of the windows. If the customers or guests are to be dunned, all the burden lies upon my back: he'd as lief eat that glass as budge after them himself. There now above stairs we have a young woman who has come to take up her lodgings here, and I don't believe she has got any money, by her over-civility. I am certain she is very slow of payment, and I wish she were put in mind of it." "What signifies minding her?" cried the host; "if she be slow she's sure." "I don't know that," replied the wife; "but I know that I am sure she has been here a fortnight, and we have not yet seen the cross of her money." "I suppose, my dear," cried he, "we shall have it all in a lump." "In a lump!" cried the other; "I hope we may get it any way; and that I am resolved we will this very night, or out she tramps,

bag and baggage." "Consider, my dear," cried the husband, "she is a gentlewoman, and deserves more respect." "As for the matter of that," returned the hostess, "gentle or simple, out she shall pack with a sassarara. Gentry may be good things where they take; but for my part I never saw much good of them at the sign of the Harrow." Thus saying, she ran up a narrow flight of stairs that went from the kitchen to a room overhead, and I soon perceived by the loudness of her voice, and the bitterness of her reproaches, that no money was to be had from her lodger. I could hear her remonstrances very distinctly. "Out, I say, pack out this moment! tramp, thou infamous strumpet, or I'll give thee a mark thou won't be the better for these three months. What! you trumpery, to come and take up an honest house without cross or coin to bless yourself with! come along, I say." "Oh, dear madam," cried the stranger, "pity me, pity a poor abandoned creature for one night, and death will soon do the rest." I instantly knew the voice of my poor ruined child Olivia. I flew to her rescue, while the woman was dragging her along by the hair, and I caught the dear forlorn wretch in my arms. "Welcome, any way, welcome, my dearest lost one, my treasure, to your poor old father's bosom. Though the vicious forsake thee, there is yet one in the world that will never forsake thee; though thou hadst ten thousand crimes to answer for, he will forgive them all." "Oh, my own dear"—for minutes she could say no more—"my own dearest, good papa! Could angels be kinder? How do I deserve so much? The villain, I hate him and myself, to be a reproach to so much goodness. You can't forgive me; I know you cannot." "Yes, my child, from my heart I do forgive thee: only repent, and we both shall yet be happy. We shall see many pleasant days yet, my Olivia." "Ah! never, sir, never. The rest of my wretched life must be infamy abroad, and shame at home. But, alas! papa, you look much paler than you used to do. Could such a thing as I am give you so much uneasiness? Surely you have too much wisdom to take the miseries of my guilt upon yourself!" "Our wisdom, young woman—" replied I. "Ah! why so cold a name, papa?" cried she. "This is the first time you ever called me by so cold a name." "I ask pardon, my darling," returned I; "but I was going to observe, that wisdom makes but a slow defence against trouble, though at last a sure one."

The landlady now returned to know if we did not choose a more genteel apartment; to which assenting, we were shown to a room

where we could converse more freely. After we had talked ourselves into some degree of tranquillity, I could not avoid desiring some account of the gradations that led to her present wretched situation. "That villain, sir," said she, "from the first day of our meeting, made me honourable, though private proposals."

"Villain, indeed," cried I; "and yet it in some measure surprises me, how a person of Mr. Burchell's good sense and seeming honour could be guilty of such deliberate baseness, and thus step into a family to undo it."

"My dear papa," returned my daughter, "you labour under a strange mistake. Mr. Burchell never attempted to deceive me. Instead of that, he took every opportunity of privately admonishing me against the artifices of Mr. Thornhill, who, I now find, was even worse than he represented him." "Mr. Thornhill!" interrupted I; "can it be?" "Yes, sir," returned she; "it was Mr. Thornhill who seduced me; who employed the two ladies, as he called them, but who, in fact, were abandoned women of the town, without breeding or pity, to decoy us up to London. Their artifices, you may remember, would have certainly succeeded, but for Mr. Burchell's letter, who directed those reproaches at them, which we all applied to ourselves. How he came to have so much influence as to defeat their intentions, still remains a secret to me; but I am convinced he was ever our warmest, sincerest friend."

"You amaze me, my dear," cried I; "but now I find my first suspicions of Mr. Thornhill's baseness were too well grounded: but he can triumph in security; for he is rich, and we are poor. But tell me, my child; surely it was no small temptation that could thus obliterate all the impressions of such an education, and so virtuous a disposition as thine?"

"Indeed, sir," replied she, "he owes all his triumph to the desire I had of making him, and not myself, happy. I knew that the ceremony of our marriage, which was privately performed by a Popish priest, was no way binding, and that I had nothing to trust to but his honour." "What!" interrupted I, "and were you indeed married by a priest, and in orders?" "Indeed, sir, we were," replied she, "though we were both sworn to conceal his name." "Why then, my child, come to my arms again; and now you are a thousand times more welcome than before; for you are his wife to all intents and purposes; nor can all the laws of man, though written upon tables of adamant, lessen the force of that sacred connection."

"Alas! papa," replied she, "you are but little acquainted with his villanies; he has been married already, by the same priest, to six or eight wives more, whom, like me, he has deceived and abandoned."

"Has he so?" cried I; "then we must hang the priest, and you shall inform against him to-morrow." "But, sir," returned she, "will that be right, when I am sworn to secrecy?" "My dear," I replied, "if you have made such a promise, I cannot, nor will I, tempt you to break it. Even though it may benefit the public, you must not inform against him. In all human institutions a smaller evil is allowed, to procure a greater good: as, in politics, a province may be given away to secure a kingdom; in medicine, a limb may be lopped off to preserve the body. But in religion the law is written and inflexible, *never* to do evil. And this law, my child, is right; for otherwise, if we commit a smaller evil to procure a greater good, certain guilt would be thus incurred in expectation of contingent advantage. And though the advantage should certainly follow, yet the interval between commission and advantage, which is allowed to be guilty, may be that in which we are called away to answer for the things we have done,

and the volume of human actions is closed for ever. But I interrupt you, my dear: go on."

"The very next morning," continued she, "I found what little expectations I was to have from his sincerity. That very morning he introduced me to two unhappy women more, whom, like me, he had deceived, but who lived in contented prostitution. I loved him too tenderly to bear such rivals in his affections, and strove to forget my infamy in a tumult of pleasures. With this view I danced, dressed, and talked, but still was unhappy. The gentlemen who visited there told me every moment of the power of my charms, and this only contributed to increase my melancholy, as I had thrown all their power quite away. Thus each day I grew more pensive and he more insolent, till at last the monster had the assurance to offer me to a young baronet of his acquaintance. Need I describe, sir, how this ingratitude stung me? My answer to this proposal was almost madness. I desired to part. As I was going, he offered me a purse; but I flung it at him with indignation, and burst from him in a rage that for awhile kept me insensible of the miseries of my situation. But I soon looked round me, and saw myself a vile, abject, guilty thing, without one friend in the world to apply to. Just in that interval a stage-coach happening to pass by, I took a place, it being my only aim to be driven at a distance from a wretch I despised and detested. I was set down here; where, since my arrival, my own anxiety, and this woman's unkindness, have been my only companions. The hours of pleasure that I have passed with my mamma and sister now grow painful to me. Their sorrows are much; but mine are greater than theirs; for mine are mixed with guilt and infamy."

"Have patience, my child," cried I, "and I hope things will yet be better. Take some repose to-night, and to-morrow I'll carry you home to your mother and the rest of the family, from whom you will receive a kind reception. Poor woman! this has gone to her heart; but she loves you still, Olivia, and will forget it."

CHAPTER XXII.

OFFENCES ARE EASILY PARDONED WHERE THERE IS LOVE AT BOTTOM.

THE next morning I took my daughter behind me, and set out on my return home. As we travelled along, I strove by every persuasion to calm her sorrows and fears, and to arm her with resolution to bear the presence of her offended mother. I took every opportunity, from the prospect of a fine country through which we passed, to observe how much kinder Heaven was to us than we to each other; and that the misfortunes of Nature's making were but very few. I assured her that she should never perceive any change in my affections, and that during my life, which yet might be long, she might depend upon a guardian and an instructor. I armed her against the censures of the world, showed her that books were sweet, unreproaching companions to the miserable, and that, if they could not bring us to enjoy life, they would at least teach us to endure it.

The hired horse that we rode was to be put up that night at an inn by the way, within about five miles from my house; and as I was willing to prepare my family for my daughter's reception, I determined to leave her that night at the inn, and to return for her, accompanied by my daughter Sophia, early the next morning. It was night before we reached our appointed stage; however, after seeing her provided with a decent apartment, and having ordered the hostess to prepare proper refreshments, I kissed her, and proceeded towards home. And now my heart caught new sensations of pleasure, the nearer I approached that peaceful mansion. As a bird that had been frightened from its nest, my affections outwent my haste, and hovered round my little fireside with all the rapture of expectation. I called up the many fond things I had to say, and anticipated the welcome I was to receive. I already felt my wife's tender embrace, and smiled at the joy of my little ones. As I walked but slowly, the night waned apace; the labourers of the day were all retired to rest; the lights were out in every cottage; no sounds were heard but of the shrilling cock, and the deep-mouthed watch-dog, at hollow distance. I approached my little abode of pleasure, and, before I was within a furlong of the place, our honest mastiff came running to welcome me.

It was now near midnight that I came to knock at my door: all was

still and silent—my heart dilated with unutterable happiness, when, to my amazement, I saw the house bursting out into a blaze of fire, and every aperture red with conflagration! I gave a loud convulsive outcry, and fell upon the pavement insensible. This alarmed my son, who had till this been asleep, and he, perceiving the flames, instantly awaked my wife and daughter, and all running out, naked and wild with apprehension, recalled me to life with their anguish. But it was only to objects of new terror, for the flames had by this time caught the roof of our dwelling, part after part continuing to fall in, while the family stood with silent agony looking on as if they enjoyed the blaze. I gazed upon them and upon it by turns, and then looked round me for my two little ones; but they were not to be seen. "Oh, misery! where," cried I, "where are my little ones?" "They are burnt to death in the flames," said my wife, calmly, "and I will die with them." That moment I heard the cry of the babes within, who were just awaked by the fire, and nothing could have stopped me. "Where, where are my children?" cried I, rushing through the flames, and bursting the door of the chamber in which they were confined; "where are my little ones?" "Here, dear papa, here we are!" cried they together, while the flames were just catching the bed where they lay. I caught them both in my arms, and conveyed them through the fire as fast as possible, while, just as I was going out, the roof sunk in. "Now," cried I, holding up my children, "now let the flames burn on, and all my possessions perish; here they are—I have saved my treasure: here, my dearest, here are our treasures, and we shall yet be happy." We kissed our little darlings a thousand times; they clasped us round the neck, and seemed to share our transports, while their mother laughed and wept by turns.

I now stood a calm spectator of the flames, and after some time began to perceive that my arm to the shoulder was scorched in a terrible manner. It was, therefore, out of my power to give my son any assistance, either in attempting to save our goods, or preventing the flames spreading to our corn. By this time the neighbours were alarmed, and came running to our assistance; but all they could do was to stand, like us, spectators of the calamity. My goods, among which were the notes I had reserved for my daughters' fortunes, were entirely consumed, except a box with some papers that stood in the kitchen, and two or three things more of little consequence, which my son brought away in the beginning. The neighbours contributed,

however, what they could to lighten our distress. They brought us clothes, and furnished one of our outhouses with kitchen utensils; so that by daylight we had another, though a wretched, dwelling to retire to. My honest next neighbour and his children were not the least assiduous in providing us with everything necessary, and offering whatever consolation untutored benevolence could suggest.

When the fears of my family had subsided, curiosity to know the cause of my long stay began to take place; having, therefore, informed them of every particular, I proceeded to prepare them for the reception of our lost one; and, though we had nothing but wretchedness now to impart, I was willing to procure her a welcome to what we had: this task would have been more difficult but for our own recent calamity which had humbled my wife's pride, and blunted it by more poignant afflictions. Being unable to go for my poor child myself, as my arm grew very painful, I sent my son and daughter, who soon returned, supporting the wretched delinquent, who had not the courage to look up at her mother, whom no instructions of mine could persuade to a perfect reconciliation; for women have a much stronger sense of female

error than men. "Ah, madam!" cried her mother, "this is but a poor place you are come to after so much finery. My daughter Sophy and I can afford but little entertainment to persons who have kept company only with people of distinction; yes, Miss Livy, your poor father and I have suffered very much of late; but I hope Heaven will forgive you." During this reception the unhappy victim stood pale and trembling, unable to weep or to reply; but I could not continue a silent spectator of her distress; wherefore, assuming a degree of severity in my voice and manner, which was ever followed with instant submission, I said, "I entreat, woman, that my words may be now marked once for all: I have here brought you back a poor deluded wanderer—her return to duty demands the revival of our tenderness; the real hardships of life are now coming fast upon us; let us not, therefore, increase them by dissensions among each other: if we live harmoniously together, we may yet be contented, as there are enough of us to shut out the censuring world, and keep each other in countenance. The kindness of Heaven is promised to the penitent, and let ours be directed by the example. Heaven, we are assured, is much more pleased to view a repentant sinner, than ninety-nine persons who have supported a course of undeviating rectitude: and this is right; for that single effort by which we stop short in the down-hill path to perdition is of itself a greater exertion of virtue than a hundred acts of justice."

CHAPTER XXIII.

NONE BUT THE GUILTY CAN BE LONG AND COMPLETELY MISERABLE.

SOME assiduity was now required to make our present abode as convenient as possible, and we were soon again qualified to enjoy our former serenity. Being disabled myself from assisting my son in our usual occupations, I read to my family from the few books that were saved, and particularly from such as, by amusing the imagination, contributed to ease the heart. Our good neighbours, too, came every day with the kindest condolence, and fixed a time in which they were all to assist in repairing my former dwelling. Honest Farmer Williams was not last among these visitors, but heartily offered his friendship. He would even have renewed his addresses to my daughter; but she rejected them in such a manner as totally repressed his future solicitations. Her grief seemed formed for continuing, and she was the only person in our little society that a week did not restore to cheerfulness. She now lost that unblushing innocence which once taught her to respect herself, and to seek pleasure by pleasing. Anxiety had now taken strong possession of her mind; her beauty began to be impaired with her constitution, and neglect still more contributed to diminish it. Every tender epithet bestowed on her sister brought a pang to her heart, and a tear to her eye; and as one vice, though cured, ever plants others where it has been, so her former guilt, though driven out by repentance, left jealousy and envy behind. I strove a thousand ways to lessen her care, and even forgot my own pain in a concern for hers, collecting such amusing passages of history as a strong memory and some reading could suggest. "Our happiness, my dear," I would say, "is in the power of One who can bring it about by a thousand unforeseen ways that mock our foresight. If example be necessary to prove this, I'll give you a story, my child, told us by a grave, though sometimes a romancing, historian.

"'Matilda was married very young to a Neapolitan nobleman of the first quality, and found herself a widow and a mother at the age of fifteen. As she stood one day caressing her infant son in the open window of an apartment, which hung over the river Volturna, the child, with a sudden spring, leaped from her arms into the flood below, and disappeared in a moment. The mother, struck with instant

surprise, and making an effort to save him, plunged in after; but, far from being able to assist the infant, she herself with great difficulty escaped to the opposite shore, just when some French soldiers were plundering the country on that side, who immediately made her their prisoner.

"'As the war was then carried on between the French and Italians with the utmost inhumanity, they were going at once to perpetrate those two extremes suggested by appetite and cruelty. This base resolution, however, was opposed by a young officer, who, though their retreat required the utmost expedition, placed her behind him, and brought her in safety to his native city. Her beauty at first caught his eye: her merit, soon after, his heart. They were married; he rose to the highest posts; they lived long together, and were happy. But the felicity of a soldier can never be called permanent: after an interval of several years, the troops which he commanded having met with a repulse, he was obliged to take shelter in the city where he had lived with his wife. Here they suffered a siege, and the city at length was taken. Few histories can produce more various instances of cruelty than those which the French and Italians at that time exercised upon each other. It was resolved by the victors, upon this occasion, to put all the French prisoners to death; but particularly the husband of the unfortunate Matilda, as he was principally instrumental in protracting the siege. Their determinations were, in general, executed almost as soon as resolved upon. The captive soldier was led forth, and the executioner with his sword stood ready, while the spectators, in gloomy silence, awaited the fatal blow, which was only suspended till the general, who presided as judge, should give the signal. It was in this interval of anguish and expectation, that Matilda came to take the last farewell of her husband and deliverer, deploring her wretched situation, and the cruelty of fate that had saved her from perishing by a premature death in the river Volturna, to be the spectator of still greater calamities. The general, who was a young man, was struck with surprise at her beauty, and pity at her distress; but with still stronger emotions when he heard her mention her former dangers. He was her son, the infant for whom she had encountered so much danger; he acknowledged her at once as his mother, and fell at her feet. The rest may be easily supposed; the captive was set free, and all the happiness that love, friendship, and duty could confer on earth, were united.'"

In this manner I would attempt to amuse my daughter; but she listened with divided attention; for her own misfortunes engrossed all the pity she once had for those of another, and nothing gave her ease. In company she dreaded contempt; and in solitude she only found anxiety. Such was the colour of her wretchedness, when we received certain information that Mr. Thornhill was going to be married to Miss Wilmot; for whom I always suspected he had a real passion, though he took every opportunity before me to express his contempt both of her person and fortune. This news served only to increase poor Olivia's affliction; for such a flagrant breach of fidelity was more than her courage could support. I was resolved, however, to get more certain information; and to defeat, if possible, the completion of his designs, by sending my son to old Mr. Wilmot's, with instructions to know the truth of the report, and to deliver Miss Wilmot a letter intimating Mr. Thornhill's conduct in my family. My son went, in pursuance of my directions, and in three days returned, assuring us of the truth of the account; but that he had found it impossible to deliver the letter, which he was therefore obliged to leave, as Mr. Thornhill and Miss Wilmot were visiting round the country. They were to be married, he said, in a few days, having appeared together at church, the Sunday before he was there, in great splendour, the bride attended by six young ladies, and he by as many gentlemen. Their approaching nuptials filled the whole country with rejoicing, and they usually rode out together in the grandest equipage that had been seen in the country for many years. All the friends of both families, he said, were there, particularly the squire's uncle, Sir William Thornhill, who bore so good a character. He added, that nothing but mirth and feasting were going forward; that all the country praised the young bride's beauty and the bridegroom's fine person, and that they were immensely fond of each other; concluding that he could not help thinking Mr. Thornhill one of the most happy men in the world.

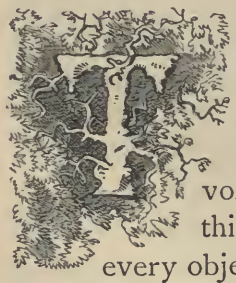
"Why, let him if he can," returned I: "but, my son, observe this bed of straw and unsheltering roof; those mouldering walls and humid floor; my wretched body thus disabled by fire, and my children weeping round me for bread: you have come home, my child, to all this; yet here, even here, you see a man that would not for a thousand worlds exchange situations. Oh, my children, if you could but learn to commune with your own hearts, and know what noble company you can make them, you would little regard the elegance and splendour of the

worthless. Almost all men have been taught to call life a passage, and themselves the travellers. The similitude still may be improved, when we observe that the good are joyful and serene, like travellers that are going towards home: the wicked but by intervals happy, like travellers that are going into exile."

My compassion for my poor daughter, overpowered by this new disaster, interrupted what I had farther to observe. I bade her mother support her, and after a short time she recovered. She appeared from that time more calm, and I imagined had gained a new degree of resolution; but appearances deceived me; for her tranquillity was the languor of overwrought resentment. A supply of provisions, charitably sent us by my kind parishioners, seemed to diffuse new cheerfulness among the rest of my family, nor was I displeased at seeing them once more sprightly and at ease. It would have been unjust to damp their satisfactions, merely to condole with resolute melancholy, or to burden them with a sadness they did not feel. Thus, once more, the tale went round, and a song was demanded, and cheerfulness condescended to hover round our little habitation.

CHAPTER XXIV.

FRESH CALAMITIES.



THE next morning the sun arose with peculiar warmth for the season, so that we agreed to breakfast together on the honeysuckle bank, where, while we sat, my youngest daughter, at my request, joined her voice to the concert on the trees about us. It was in this place my poor Olivia first met her seducer, and every object served to recall her sadness. But that melancholy which is excited by objects of pleasure, or inspired by sounds of harmony, soothes the heart instead of corroding it. Her mother, too, upon this occasion, felt a pleasing distress, and wept, and loved her daughter as before. "Do, my pretty Olivia," cried she, "let us have that little melancholy air your papa was so fond of; your sister Sophy has already obliged us. Do, child, it will please your

old father." She complied in a manner so exquisitely pathetic as moved me.

When lovely woman stoops to folly,
And finds too late that men betray,
What charm can soothe her melancholy,
What art can wash her guilt away?

The only art her guilt to cover,
To hide her shame from every eye;
To give repentance to her lover,
And wring his bosom, is—to die.

As she was concluding the last stanza, to which an interruption in her voice, from sorrow, gave peculiar softness, the appearance of Mr. Thornhill's equipage at a distance alarmed us all, but particularly increased the uneasiness of my eldest daughter, who, desirous of shunning her betrayer, returned to the house with her sister. In a few minutes he was alighted from his chariot, and, making up to the place where I was still sitting, inquired after my health with his usual air of familiarity. "Sir," replied I, "your present assurance only serves to aggravate the baseness of your character; and there was a time when I would have chastised your insolence, for presuming thus to appear before me. But now you are safe; for age has cooled my passions, and my calling restrains them."

"I vow, my dear sir," returned he, "I am amazed at all this; nor can I understand what it means! I hope you do not think your daughter's late excursion with me had anything criminal in it."

"Go," cried I, "thou art a wretch, a poor pitiful wretch, and every way a liar; but your meanness secures you from my anger. Yet, sir, I am descended from a family that would not have borne this! And so, thou vile thing! to gratify a momentary passion, thou hast made one poor creature wretched for life, and polluted a family that had nothing but honour for their portion."

"If she, or you," returned he, "are resolved to be miserable, I cannot help it. But you may still be happy; and whatever opinion you may have formed of me, you shall ever find me ready to contribute to it. We can marry her to another in a short time; and, what is more, she may keep her lover beside; for I protest I shall ever continue to have a true regard for her."

I found all my passions alarmed at this new degrading proposal; for though the mind may often be calm under great injuries, little villany can at any time get within the soul, and sting it into rage.

OLIVIA'S SONG.

OFFICERS OF JUSTICE.

"Avoid my sight, thou reptile," cried I, "nor continue to insult me with thy presence. Were my brave son at home, he would not suffer this; but I am old and disabled, and every way undone."

"I find," cried he, "you are bent upon obliging me to talk in a harsher manner than I intended. But, as I have shown you what may be hoped from my friendship, it may not be improper to represent what may be the consequences of my resentment. My attorney, to whom your late bond has been transferred, threatens hard; nor do I know how to prevent the course of justice, except by paying the money myself; which, as I have been at some expenses lately, previous to my intended marriage, is not so easy to be done. And then my steward talks of driving for the rent: it is certain he knows his duty; for I never trouble myself with affairs of that nature. Yet still I could wish to serve you, and even to have you and your daughter present at my marriage, which is shortly to be solemnised with Miss Wilmot; it is even the request of my charming Arabella herself, whom I hope you will not refuse."

"Mr. Thornhill," replied I, "hear me once for all: as to your

marriage with any but my daughter, that I never will consent to; and though your friendship could raise me to a throne, or your resentment sink me to the grave, yet would I despise both. Thou hast once wofully, irreparably deceived me. I reposed my heart upon thine honour, and have found its baseness. Never more, therefore, expect friendship from me. Go, and possess what fortune has given thee—beauty, riches, health, and pleasure. Go, and leave me to want, infamy, disease, and sorrow. Yet, humbled as I am, shall my heart still vindicate its dignity; and though thou hast my forgiveness, thou shalt ever have my contempt."

"If so," returned he, "depend upon it, you shall feel the effects of this insolence, and we shall shortly see which is the fittest object of scorn, you or me." Upon which he departed abruptly.

My wife and son, who were present at this interview, seemed terrified with apprehension. My daughters also, finding that he was gone, came out to be informed of the result of our conference; which, when known, alarmed them not less than the rest. But as to myself, I disregarded the utmost stretch of his malevolence—he had already struck the blow, and I now stood prepared to repel every new effort—like one of those instruments used in the art of war, which, however thrown, still presents a point to receive the enemy.

We soon, however, found that he had not threatened in vain; for the very next morning his steward came to demand my annual rent, which, by the train of accidents already related, I was unable to pay. The consequence of my incapacity was, his driving my cattle that evening, and their being appraised and sold the next day for less than half their value. My wife and children now, therefore, entreated me to comply upon any terms, rather than incur certain destruction. They even begged of me to admit his visits once more, and used all their little eloquence to paint the calamities I was going to endure—the terrors of a prison in so rigorous a season as the present, with the danger that threatened my health from the late accident that happened by the fire. But I continued inflexible.

"Why, my treasures," cried I, "why will you thus attempt to persuade me to the thing that is not right? My duty has taught me to forgive him, but my conscience will not permit me to approve. Would you have me applaud to the world what my heart must internally condemn? Would you have me tamely sit down and flatter our infamous betrayer; and, to avoid a prison, continually suffer the

more galling bonds of mental confinement? No, never. If we are to be taken from this abode, only let us hold to the right, and wherever we are thrown we can still retire to a charming apartment, where we can look round our own hearts with intrepidity and with pleasure."

In this manner we spent that evening. Early the next morning, as the snow had fallen in great abundance in the night, my son was employed in clearing it away, and opening a passage before the door. He had not been thus engaged long, when he came running in, with looks all pale, to tell us that two strangers, whom he knew to be officers of justice, were making towards the house.

Just as he spoke they came in, and approaching the bed where I lay, after previously informing me of their employment and business, made me their prisoner, bidding me prepare to go with them to the county gaol, which was eleven miles off.

"My friends," said I, "this is severe weather in which you are come to take me to prison; and it is particularly unfortunate at this time, as one of my arms has lately been burnt in a terrible manner, and it has thrown me into a slight fever, and I want clothes to cover me, and I am now too weak and old to walk far in such deep snow; but if it must be so——"

I then turned to my wife and children, and directed them to get together what few things were left us, and to prepare immediately for leaving this place. I entreated them to be expeditious; and desired my son to assist his eldest sister; who, from a consciousness that she was the cause of all our calamities, was fallen, and had lost anguish in insensibility. I encouraged my wife, who, pale and trembling, clasped our affrighted little ones in her arms, that clung to her bosom in silence, dreading to look round at the strangers. In the meantime my youngest daughter prepared for our departure, and as she received several hints to use despatch, in about an hour we were ready to depart.

CHAPTER XXV.

NO SITUATION, HOWEVER WRETCHED IT SEEMS, BUT HAS SOME SORT OF COMFORT ATTENDING IT.

E set forward from this peaceful neighbourhood, and walked on slowly. My eldest daughter being enfeebled by a slow fever, which had begun for some days to undermine her constitution, one of the officers, who had a horse, kindly took her behind him; for even these men cannot entirely divest themselves of humanity. My son led one of the little ones by the hand and my wife the other; while I leaned upon my youngest girl, whose, tears fell not for her own but my distresses.

We were now got from my late dwelling about two miles, when we saw a crowd running and shouting behind us, consisting of about fifty of my poorest parishioners. These, with dreadful imprecations, soon seized upon the two officers of justice, and swearing they would never see their minister go to a gaol, while they had a drop of blood to shed in his defence, were going to use them with great severity. The consequence might have been fatal, had I not immediately interposed, and with some difficulty rescued the officers from the hands of the enraged multitude. My children, who looked upon my delivery now as certain, appeared transported with joy, and were incapable of containing their raptures. But they were soon undeceived, upon hearing me address the poor deluded people, who came, as they imagined, to do me service.

"What! my friends," cried I, "and is this the way you love me? Is this the manner you obey the instructions I have given you from the pulpit? thus to fly in the face of justice, and bring down ruin on yourselves and me? Which is your ringleader? Show me the man that has thus seduced you. As sure as he lives, he shall feel my resentment. Alas! my dear deluded flock, return back to the duty you owe to God, to your country, and to me. I shall yet, perhaps, one day see you in greater felicity here, and contribute to make your lives more happy. But let it at least be my comfort, when I pen my fold for immortality, that not one here shall be wanting."

They now seemed all repentance, and melting into tears, came, one

THE VICAR TAKING LEAVE OF HIS FLOCK.
W. HANELAY.
LINTON.

after the other, to bid me farewell. I shook each tenderly by the hand, and leaving them my blessing, proceeded forward without meeting any further interruption. Some hours before night we reached the town, or rather village; for it consisted but of a few mean houses, having lost all its former opulence, and retaining no marks of its ancient superiority but the gaol.

Upon entering we put up at an inn, where we had such refreshments as could most readily be procured, and I supped with my family with my usual cheerfulness. After seeing them properly accommodated for that night, I next attended the sheriff's officers to the prison, which had formerly been built for the purposes of war, and consisted of one large apartment, strongly grated, and paved with stone, common to both felons and debtors at certain hours in the four-and-twenty. Besides this, every prisoner had a separate cell, where he was locked in for the night.

I expected upon my entrance to find nothing but lamentations, and various sounds of misery, but it was very different. The prisoners seemed all employed in one common design, that of forgetting thought in merriment or clamour. I was apprised of the usual perquisite required upon these occasions; and immediately complied with the demand, though the little money I had was very near being all exhausted. This was immediately sent away for liquor, and the whole prison was soon filled with riot, laughter, and profaneness.

"How!" cried I to myself, "shall men so very wicked be cheerful, and shall I be melancholy? I feel only the same confinement with them, and I think I have more reason to be happy."

With such reflections I laboured to become more cheerful; but cheerfulness was never yet produced by effort, which is itself painful. As I was sitting, therefore, in a corner of the gaol, in a pensive posture, one of my fellow-prisoners came up, and, sitting by me, entered into conversation. It was my constant rule in life never to avoid the conversation of any man who seemed to desire it; for if good, I might profit by his instructions; if bad, he might be assisted by mine. I found this to be a knowing man, of strong unlettered sense, but a thorough knowledge of the world, as it is called; or, more properly speaking, of human nature on the wrong side. He asked me if I had taken care to provide myself with a bed, which was a circumstance I had never once attended to.

"That's unfortunate," cried he, "as you are allowed nothing but

straw, and your apartment is very large and cold. However, you seem to be something of a gentleman, and as I have been one myself in my time, part of my bed-clothes are heartily at your service."

I thanked him, professing my surprise at finding such humanity in a gaol in misfortunes; adding, to let him see that I was a scholar, "that the sage ancient seemed to understand the value of company in affliction, when he said, *Ton kosmon aire, ei dos ton etairon;* and, in fact," continued I, "what is the world if it affords only solitude?"

"You talk of the world, sir," returned my fellow-prisoner; "the world is in its dotage, and yet the cosmogony, or creation of the world, has puzzled the philosophers of every age. What a medley of opinions have they not broached upon the creation of the world! Sanchoniathon, Manetho, Berosus, and Ocellus Lucanus, have all attempted it in vain. The latter has these words: *Anarchon ara kai atelutaion to pan*, which implies——" "I ask pardon, sir," cried I, "for interrupting so much learning; but I think I have heard all this before. Have I not had the pleasure of once seeing you at Welbridge fair? and is not your name Ephraim Jenkinson?" At this demand he only sighed. "I suppose you must recollect," resumed I, "one Doctor Primrose, from whom you bought a horse."

He now at once recollected me, for the gloominess of the place and the approaching night had prevented his distinguishing my features before. "Yes, sir," returned Mr. Jenkinson, "I remember you perfectly well; I bought a horse, but forgot to pay for him. Your neighbour Flamborough is the only prosecutor I am any way afraid of at the next assizes; for he intends to swear positively against me as a coiner. I am heartily sorry, sir, I ever deceived you, or indeed any man; for you see," continued he, pointing to his shackles, "what my tricks have brought me to."

"Well, sir," replied I, "your kindness in offering me assistance, when you could expect no return, shall be repaid with my endeavours to soften or totally suppress Mr. Flamborough's evidence, and I will send my son to him for that purpose the first opportunity: nor do I in the least doubt but he will comply with my request; and as to my own evidence, you need be under no uneasiness about that."

"Well, sir," cried he, "all the return I can make shall be yours. You shall have more than half my bed-clothes to-night, and I'll take care to stand your friend in the prison, where I think I have some influence."

I thanked him, and could not avoid being surprised at the present youthful change in his aspect; for at the time I had seen him before he appeared at least sixty. "Sir," answered he, "you are little acquainted with the world. I had at that time false hair, and have learned the art of counterfeiting every age from seventeen to seventy. Ah, sir! had I but bestowed half the pains in learning a trade, that I have in learning to be a scoundrel, I might have been a rich man at this day. But, rogue as I am, still I may be your friend, and that, perhaps, when you least expect it."

We were now prevented from further conversation by the arrival of the gaoler's servants, who came to call over the prisoners' names, and lock up for the night. A fellow also with a bundle of straw for my bed attended, who led me along a dark narrow passage into a room paved like the common prison, and in one corner of this I spread my bed, and the clothes given me by my fellow-prisoner; which done, my conductor, who was civil enough, bade me a good night. After my usual meditations, and having praised my heavenly Corrector, I laid myself down and slept with the utmost tranquillity until morning.

CHAPTER XXVI.

A REFORMATION IN THE GAOL—TO MAKE LAWS COMPLETE, THEY SHOULD REWARD AS WELL AS PUNISH.

THE next morning early I was awakened by my family, whom I found in tears at my bed-side. The gloomy appearance of everything about us, it seems, had daunted them. I gently rebuked their sorrow, assuring them I had never slept with greater tranquillity, and next inquired after my eldest daughter, who was not among them. They informed me that yesterday's uneasiness and fatigue had increased her fever, and it was judged proper to leave her behind. My next care was to send my son to procure a room or two to lodge my family in, as near the prison as conveniently could be found. He obeyed, but could only find one apartment, which was hired at a small expense for his mother and sisters, the gaoler with humanity consenting to let him and his two little brothers

lie in the prison with me. A bed was therefore prepared for them in a corner of the room, which I thought answered very conveniently. I was willing, however, previously to know whether my little children chose to lie in a place which seemed to fright them upon entrance.

"Well," cried I, "my good boys, how do you like your bed? I hope you are not afraid to lie in this room, dark as it appears."

"No, papa," says Dick; "I am not afraid to lie anywhere where you are."

"And I," says Bill, who was yet but four years old, "love every place best that my papa is in."

After this I allotted to each of the family what they were to do. My daughter was particularly directed to watch her sister's declining health; my wife was to attend me; my little boys were to read to me: "And as for you, my son," continued I, "it is by the labour of your hands we must all hope to be supported: Your wages as a day-labourer will be fully sufficient, with proper frugality, to maintain us all, and comfortably too. Thou art now sixteen years old, and hast strength, and it was given thee, my son, for very useful purposes; for it must save from famine your helpless parents and family. Prepare then this evening to look out for work against to-morrow, and bring home every night what money you earn for our support."

Having thus instructed him, and settled the rest, I walked down to the common prison, where I could enjoy more air and room. But I was not long there when the execrations, lewdness, and brutality that invaded me on every side, drove me back to my apartment again. Here I sat for some time pondering upon the strange infatuation of wretches who, finding all mankind in open arms against them, were labouring to make themselves a future and tremendous enemy.

Their insensibility excited my highest compassion, and blotted my own uneasiness from my mind. It even appeared a duty incumbent upon me to attempt to reclaim them. I resolved, therefore, once more to return, and in spite of their contempt, to give them my advice, and conquer them by perseverance. Going therefore among them again, I informed Mr. Jenkinson of my design, at which he laughed heartily, but communicated it to the rest. The proposal was received with the greatest good humour, as it promised to afford a new fund of entertainment to persons who had now no other resource for mirth but what could be derived from ridicule or debauchery.

I therefore read them a portion of the service, with a loud, unaffected voice, and found my audience perfectly merry upon the occasion. Lewd whispers, groans of contrition burlesqued, winking, and coughing, alternately excited laughter. However, I continued with my natural solemnity to read on, sensible that what I did might amend some, but could itself receive no contamination from any.

After reading, I entered upon my exhortation, which was rather calculated at first to amuse them than to reprove. I previously observed that no other motive but their welfare could induce me to this; that I was their fellow-prisoner, and now got nothing by preaching. I was sorry, I said, to hear them so very profane; because they got nothing by it, and might lose a great deal: "For, be assured, my friends," cried I ("for you are my friends, however the world may disclaim your friendship), though you swore twelve thousand oaths in a day, it would not put one penny in your purse. Then what signifies calling every moment upon the devil, and courting his friendship, since you find how scurvily he uses you? He has given you nothing here, you find, but a mouthful of oaths and an empty belly; and, by the best accounts I have of him, he will give you nothing that's good hereafter.

"If used ill in our dealings with one man, we naturally go elsewhere. Were it not worth your while, then, just to try how you may like the usage of another Master, who gives you fair promises, at least, to come to him? Surely, my friends, of all stupidity in the world, his must be the greatest who, after robbing a house, runs to the thief-takers for protection. And yet how are you more wise? You are all seeking comfort from one that has already betrayed you, applying to a more malicious being than any thief-taker of them all; for they only decoy and then hang you; but he decoys and hangs, and, what is worst of all, will not let you loose after the hangman has done."

When I had concluded, I received the compliments of my audience, some of whom came and shook me by the hand, swearing that I was a very honest fellow, and that they desired my further acquaintance. I therefore promised to repeat my lecture next day, and actually conceived some hope of making a reformation here; for it had ever been my opinion that no man was past the hour of amendment, every heart lying open to the shafts of reproof, if the archer could but take a proper aim. When I had thus satisfied my mind, I went back to my apartment, where my wife prepared a frugal meal, while Mr. Jenkinson begged leave to add his dinner to ours, and partake of the pleasure, as

TEACHING THE PRISONERS.

he was kind enough to express it, of my conversation. He had not yet seen my family, for as they came to my apartment by a door in the narrow passage already described, by this means they avoided the common prison. Jenkinson at the first interview, therefore, seemed not a little struck with the beauty of my youngest daughter, which her pensive air contributed to heighten, and my little ones did not pass unnoticed.

"Alas! doctor," cried he, "these children are too handsome and too good for such a place as this."

"Why, Mr. Jenkinson," replied I, "thank Heaven, my children are pretty tolerable in morals; and if they be good, it matters little for the rest."

"I fancy, sir," returned my fellow-prisoner, "that it must give you a great comfort to have all this little family about you."

"A comfort! Mr. Jenkinson," replied I; "yes, it is indeed a comfort, and I would not be without them for all the world; for they can make a dungeon seem a palace. There is but one way in this life of wounding my happiness, and that is by injuring them."

"I am afraid then, sir," cried he, "that I am in some measure culpable; for I think I see here" (looking at my son Moses) "one that I have injured, and by whom I wish to be forgiven."

My son immediately recollected his voice and features, though he had before seen him in disguise, and taking him by the hand, with a smile forgave him. "Yet," continued he, "I can't help wondering at what you could see in my face, to think me a proper mark for deception."

"My dear sir," returned the other, "it was not your face, but your white stockings, and the black riband in your hair, that allured me. But, no disparagement to your parts, I have deceived wiser men than you in my time; and yet with all my tricks the blockheads have been too many for me at last."

"I suppose," cried my son, "that the narrative of such a life as yours must be extremely instructive and amusing."

"Not much of either," returned Mr. Jenkinson. "Those relations which describe the tricks and vices only of mankind, by increasing our suspicion in life, retard our success. The traveller that distrusts every person he meets, and turns back upon the appearance of every man that looks like a robber, seldom arrives in time at his journey's end.

"Indeed, I think, from my own experience, that the knowing one is the silliest fellow under the sun. I was thought cunning from my very childhood; when but seven years old, the ladies would say that I was a perfect little man; at fourteen, I knew the world, cocked my hat, and loved the ladies; at twenty, though I was perfectly honest, yet every one thought me so cunning that no one would trust me. Thus I was at last obliged to turn sharper in my own defence, and have lived ever since, my head throbbing with schemes to deceive, and my heart palpitating with fears of detection. I used often to laugh at your honest simple neighbour Flamborough, and one way or another generally cheated him once a year. Yet still the honest man went forward without suspicion, and grew rich, while I still continued tricksy and cunning, and was poor without the consolation of being honest. However," continued he, "let me know your case, and what has brought you here; perhaps, though I have not skill to avoid a gaol myself, I may extricate my friends."

In compliance with his curiosity, I informed him of the whole train of accidents and follies that had plunged me into my present troubles, and my utter inability to get free.

After hearing my story, and pausing some minutes, he slapped his forehead, as if he had hit upon something material, and took his leave, saying he would try what could be done.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

THE next morning I communicated to my wife and children the schemes I had planned of reforming the prisoners, which they received with universal disapprobation, alleging the impossibility and impropriety of it; adding that my endeavours would no way contribute to their amendment, but might probably disgrace my calling.

"Excuse me," returned I; "these people, however fallen, are still men; and that is a very good title to my affections. Good counsel rejected returns to enrich the giver's bosom; and though the instruction I communicate may not mend them, yet it will assuredly mend myself. If these wretches, my children, were princes, there would be thousands ready to offer their ministry; but in my opinion the heart that is buried in a dungeon is as precious as that seated upon a throne. Yes, my treasures, if I can mend them, I will; perhaps they will not all despise me: perhaps I may catch up even one from the gulf, and that will be great gain; for is there upon earth a gem so precious as the human soul?"

Thus saying, I left them and descended to the common prison, where I found the prisoners very merry, expecting my arrival; and each prepared with some gaol-trick to play upon the doctor. Thus, as I was going to begin, one turned my wig awry as if by accident, and then asked my pardon. A second, who stood at some distance, had a knack of spitting through his teeth, which fell in showers upon my book. A third would cry "Amen!" in such an affected tone as gave the rest great delight. A fourth had slily picked my pocket of my spectacles. But there was one whose trick gave more universal pleasure than all the rest; for observing the manner in which I had disposed my books on the table before me, he very dexterously displaced one of them, and put an obscene jest-book of his own in the place. However, I took no notice of all that this mischievous group of little beings could do, but went on, perfectly sensible that what was ridiculous in my attempt would excite mirth only the first or second time, while what was serious would be permanent. My design suc-

ceeded, and in less than six days some were penitent, and all were attentive.

It was now that I applauded my perseverance and address, at thus giving sensibility to wretches divested of every moral feeling, and now began to think of doing them temporal services also, by rendering their situation somewhat more comfortable. Their time had hitherto been divided between famine and excess, tumultuous riot and bitter repining. Their only employment was quarrelling among each other, playing at cribbage, and cutting tobacco-stoppers. From this last mode of idle industry I took the hint of setting such as chose to work at cutting pegs for tobacconists and shoemakers, the proper wood being bought by a general subscription, and, when manufactured, sold by my appointment; so that each earned something every day; a trifle indeed, but sufficient to maintain him.

I did not stop here, but instituted fines for the punishment of immorality, and rewards for peculiar industry. Thus in less than a fortnight I had formed them into something social and humane, and had the pleasure of regarding myself as a legislator, who had brought men from their native ferocity into friendship and obedience.

And it were highly to be wished that legislative power would thus direct the law rather to reformation than severity; that it would seem convinced that the work of eradicating crimes is not by making punishments familiar, but formidable. Then, instead of our present prisons, which find or make men guilty, which enclose wretches for the commission of one crime, and return them, if returned alive, fitted for the perpetration of thousands, we should see, as in other parts of Europe, places of penitence and solitude, where the accused might be attended by such as could give them repentance, if guilty, or new motives to virtue, if innocent. And this, but not the increasing punishments, is the way to mend a state: nor can I avoid even questioning the validity of that right which social combinations have assumed of capitally punishing offences of a slight nature. In cases of murder their right is obvious, as it is the duty of us all, from the law of self-defence, to cut off that man who has shown a disregard for the life of another. Against such all nature rises in arms, but it is not so against him who steals my property. Natural law gives me no right to take away his life, as by that the horse he steals is as much his property as mine. If, then, I have any right, it must be from a compact made between us, that he who deprives the other of his horse

shall die. But this is a false compact; because no man has a right to barter his life, any more than to take it away, as it is not his own. And, besides, the compact is inadequate, and would be set aside even in a court of modern equity, as there is a great penalty for a very trifling convenience, since it is far better that two men should live than that one man should ride. But a compact that is false between two men is equally so between a hundred or a hundred thousand; for as ten millions of circles can never make a square, so the united voice of myriads cannot lend the smallest foundation to falsehood. It is thus that reason speaks, and untutored nature says the same thing. Savages, that are directed by natural law alone, are very tender of the lives of each other; they seldom shed blood but to retaliate former cruelty.

Our Saxon ancestors, fierce as they were in war, had but few executions in times of peace; and in all commencing governments, that have the print of nature still strong upon them, scarce any crime is held capital.

It is among the citizens of a refined community that penal laws, which are in the hands of the rich, are laid upon the poor. Government, while it grows older, seems to acquire the moroseness of age; and as if our property were become dearer in proportion as it increased, as if the more enormous our wealth the more extensive our fears, all our possessions are paled up with new edicts every day, and hung round with gibbets to scare every invader.

I cannot tell whether it is from the number of our penal laws, or the licentiousness of our people, that this country should show more convicts in a year than half the dominions of Europe united. Perhaps it is owing to both; for they mutually produce each other. When by indiscriminate penal laws a nation beholds the same punishment affixed to dissimilar degrees of guilt, from perceiving no distinction in the penalty the people are led to lose all sense of distinction in the crime, and this distinction is the bulwark of all morality: thus the multitude of laws produce new vices, and new vices call for fresh restraints.

It were to be wished, then, that power, instead of contriving new laws to punish vice, instead of drawing hard the cords of society till a convulsion come to burst them, instead of cutting away wretches as useless before we have tried their utility, instead of converting correction into vengeance, it were to be wished that we tried the

restrictive arts of government, and made law the protector, but not the tyrant, of the people. We should then find that creatures whose souls are held as dross only wanted the hand of a refiner; we should then find that wretches, now stuck up for long tortures, lest luxury should feel a momentary pang, might, if properly treated, serve to sinew the state in times of danger; that as their faces are like ours, their hearts are so too; that few minds are so base as that perseverance cannot amend; that a man may see his last crime without dying for it; and that very little blood will serve to cement our security.*

CHAPTER XXVIII.

HAPPINESS AND MISERY RATHER THE RESULT OF PRUDENCE THAN OF VIRTUE IN THIS LIFE; TEMPORAL EVILS OR FELICITIES BEING REGARDED BY HEAVEN AS THINGS MERELY IN THEMSELVES TRIFLING, AND UNWORTHY ITS CARE IN THE DISTRIBUTION.

I HAD now been confined more than a fortnight, but had not since my arrival been visited by my dear Olivia, and I greatly longed to see her. Having communicated my wishes to my wife, the next morning the poor girl entered my apartment leaning on her sister's arm. The change which I saw in her countenance struck me. The numberless graces that once resided there were now fled, and the hand of Death seemed to have moulded every feature to alarm me. Her temples were sunk, her forehead was tense, and a fatal paleness sat upon her cheek.

"I am glad to see thee, my dear," cried I; "but why this dejection, Livy? I hope, my love, you have too great a regard for me to permit disappointment thus to undermine a life which I prize as my own. Be cheerful, child, and we yet may see happier days."

"You have ever, sir," replied she, "been kind to me, and it adds to my pain that I shall never have an opportunity of sharing that

* One cannot read the views and reflections on prisons contained in this chapter without being impressed with their wisdom, sagacity, and philanthropy, so much in advance of the day. Even the great heart of Howard was as yet untouched by the misery of English gaols, which he had not commenced to visit till seven years afterwards. "I may remark," said the Earl of Carlisle, speaking of the "Vicar of Wakefield," at the inauguration of Goldsmith's statue in Dublin, January 5, 1864, "that the prison scene in that excellent novel preceded certainly, and perhaps suggested, some of the benevolent exertions of Howard and Fry."

happiness you promise. Happiness, I fear, is no longer reserved for me here, and I long to be rid of a place where I have only found distress. Indeed, sir, I wish you would make a proper submission to Mr. Thornhill: it may in some measure induce him to pity you, and it will give me relief in dying."

"Never, child," replied I, "never will I be brought to acknowledge my daughter a prostitute; for though the world may look upon your offence with scorn, let it be mine to regard it as a mark of credulity, not of guilt. My dear, I am no way miserable in this place, however dismal it may seem; and be assured that while you continue to bless me by living, he shall never have my consent to make you more wretched by marrying another."

After the departure of my daughter, my fellow-prisoner, who was by at this interview, sensibly enough expostulated upon my obstinacy in refusing a submission which promised to give me freedom. He observed, that the rest of my family was not to be sacrificed to the peace of one child alone, and she the only one who had offended me. "Beside," added he, "I don't know if it be just thus to obstruct the union of man and wife, which you do at present, by refusing to consent to a match you cannot hinder, but may render unhappy."

"Sir," replied I, "you are unacquainted with the man that oppresses us. I am very sensible that no submission I can make could procure me liberty even for an hour. I am told that even in this very room a debtor of his, no later than last year, died for want. But though my submission and approbation could transfer me from hence to the most beautiful apartment he is possessed of, yet I would grant neither, as something whispers me that it would be giving a sanction to adultery. While my daughter lives, no other marriage of his shall ever be legal in my eye. Were she removed, indeed, I should be the basest of men, from any resentment of my own, to attempt putting asunder those who wished for a union. No; villain as he is, I should then wish him married, to prevent the consequences of his future debaucheries. But now should I not be the most cruel of all fathers to sign an instrument which must send my child to the grave, merely to avoid a prison myself; and thus, to escape one pang, break my child's heart with a thousand?"

He acquiesced in the justice of this answer, but could not avoid observing, that he feared my daughter's life was already too much wasted to keep me long a prisoner. "However," continued he,

A DAUGHTER'S VISIT.
H. ANELAY.

"though you refuse to submit to the nephew, I hope you have no objections to laying your case before the uncle, who has the first character in the kingdom for everything that is just and good. I would advise you to send him a letter by the post, intimating all his nephew's ill usage, and, my life for it, that in three days you shall have an answer." I thanked him for the hint, and instantly set about complying; but I wanted paper, and unluckily all our money had been laid out that morning in provisions: however, he supplied me.

For the three ensuing days I was in a state of anxiety to know what reception my letter might meet with; but in the meantime was frequently solicited by my wife to submit to any conditions rather than remain here, and every hour received repeated accounts of the decline of my daughter's health. The third day and the fourth arrived, but I received no answer to my letter: the complaints of a stranger against a favourite nephew were no way likely to succeed; so that these hopes soon vanished like all my former. My mind, however, still supported itself, though confinement and bad air began to make a visible

alteration in my health, and my arm that had suffered in the fire grew worse. My children, however, sat by me, and, while I was stretched on my straw, read to me by turns, or listened and wept at my instructions. But my daughter's health declined faster than mine: every message from her contributed to increase my apprehensions and pain. The fifth morning after I had written the letter which was sent to Sir William Thornhill, I was alarmed with an account that she was speechless. Now it was that confinement was truly painful to me; my soul was bursting from its prison to be near the pillow of my child, to comfort, to strengthen her, to receive her last wishes, and teach her soul the way to heaven. Another account came—she was expiring, and yet I was debarred the small comfort of weeping by her. My fellow-prisoner, some time after, came with the last account. He bade me be patient—she was dead! The next morning he returned, and found me with my two little ones, now my only companions, who were using all their innocent efforts to comfort me. They entreated to read to me, and bade me not to cry, for I was now too old to weep. "And is not my sister an angel now, papa?" cried the eldest; "and why then are you sorry for her? I wish I were an angel, out of this frightful place, if my papa were with me." "Yes," added my youngest darling, "heaven, where my sister is, is a finer place than this, and there are none but good people there, and the people here are very bad."

Mr. Jenkinson interrupted their harmless prattle, by observing that, now my daughter was no more, I should seriously think of the rest of my family, and attempt to save my own life, which was every day declining for want of necessaries and wholesome air. He added that it was now incumbent on me to sacrifice any pride or resentment of my own to the welfare of those who depended on me for support; and that I was now, both by reason and justice, obliged to try to reconcile my landlord.

"Heaven be praised!" replied I, "there is no pride left me now. I should detest my own heart, if I saw either pride or resentment lurking there. On the contrary, as my oppressor has been once my parishioner, I hope one day to present him up an unpolluted soul at the eternal tribunal. No, sir, I have no resentment now; and though he has taken from me what I held dearer than all his treasures, though he has wrung my heart, for I am sick almost to fainting, very sick, my fellow-prisoner, yet that shall never inspire me with

vengeance. I am now willing to approve his marriage, and if this submission can do him any pleasure, let him know, that if I have done him any injury I am sorry for it." Mr. Jenkinson took pen and ink, and wrote down my submission nearly as I have expressed it, to which I signed my name. My son was employed to carry the letter to Mr. Thornhill, who was then at his seat in the country. He went, and in about six hours returned with a verbal answer. He had some difficulty, he said, to get a sight of his landlord, as the servants were insolent and suspicious; but he accidentally saw him as he was going out upon business, preparing for his marriage, which was to be in three days. He continued to inform us that he stepped up in the humblest manner, and delivered the letter, which, when Mr. Thornhill had read, he said that all submission was now too late and unnecessary: that he had heard of our application to his uncle, which met with the contempt it deserved: and, as for the rest, that all future applications should be directed to his attorney, not to him. He observed, however, that as he had a very good opinion of the discretion of the two young ladies, they might have been the most agreeable intercessors.

"Well, sir," said I, to my fellow-prisoner, "you now discover the temper of the man who oppresses me. He can at once be facetious and cruel; but, let him use me as he will, I shall soon be free, in spite of all his bolts to restrain me. I am now drawing towards an abode that looks brighter as I approach it; this expectation cheers my afflictions, and though I leave a helpless family of orphans behind me, yet they will not be utterly forsaken; some friend, perhaps, will be found to assist them, for the sake of their poor father, and some may charitably relieve them for the sake of their heavenly Father."

Just as I spoke, my wife, whom I had not seen that day before, appeared with looks of terror, and making efforts, but unable to speak. "Why, my love," cried I, "why will you thus increase my afflictions by your own? What though no submissions can turn our severe master, though he has doomed me to die in this place of wretchedness, and though we have lost a darling child, yet still you will find comfort in your other children when I shall be no more." "We have indeed lost," returned she, "a darling child! My Sophia, my dearest is gone—snatched from us, carried off by ruffians."

"How, madam!" cried my fellow-prisoner; "Miss Sophia carried off by villains! Sure it cannot be!"

She could only answer with a fixed look and a flood of tears. But one of the prisoner's wives, who was present, and came in with her, gave us a more distinct account; she informed us, that as my wife, my daughter, and herself were taking a walk together on the great road a little way out of the village, a postchaise and pair drove up to them, and instantly stopped. Upon which a well-dressed man, but not Mr. Thornhill, stepping out, clasped my daughter round the waist, and, forcing her in, bid the postilion drive on, so that they were out of sight in a moment.

"Now," cried I, "the sum of my miseries is made up; nor is it in the power of anything on earth to give me another pang. What! not one left! not to leave me one! the monster! the child that was next my heart! she had the beauty of an angel, and almost the wisdom of an angel. But support that woman, nor let her fall. Not to leave me one!" "Alas! my husband," said my wife, "you seem to want comfort even more than I. Our distresses are great; but I could bear this and more, if I saw you but easy. They may take away my children, and all the world, if they leave me but you."

My son, who was present, endeavoured to moderate her grief; he bade us take comfort, for he hoped that we might still have reason to be thankful. "My child," cried I, "look round the world, and see if there be any happiness left me now. Is not every ray of comfort shut out, while all our bright prospects only lie beyond the grave?" "My dear father," returned he, "I hope there is still something that will give you an interval of satisfaction, for I have a letter from my brother George." "What of him, child?" interrupted I; "does he know our misery? I hope my boy is exempt from any part of what his wretched family suffers." "Yes, sir," returned he, "he is perfectly gay, cheerful, and happy. His letter brings nothing but good news; he is the favourite of his colonel, who promises to procure him the very next lieutenancy that becomes vacant."

"And are you sure of all this?" cried my wife; "are you sure that nothing ill has befallen my boy?" "Nothing, indeed, madam," returned my son; "you shall see the letter, which will give you the highest pleasure: and, if anything can procure you comfort, I am sure that will." "But are you sure," still repeated she, "that the letter is from himself, and that he is really so happy?" "Yes, madam," replied he, "it is certainly his, and he will one day be the credit and the support of our family." "Then I thank Providence," cried she, "that my last

letter to him has miscarried. Yes, my dear," continued she, turning to me, "I will now confess that though the hand of Heaven is sore upon us in other instances, it has been favourable here. By the last letter I wrote my son, which was in the bitterness of anger, I desired him, upon his mother's blessing, and if he had the heart of a man, to see justice done his father and sister, and avenge our cause. But, thanks be to Him who directs all things, it has miscarried, and I am at rest." "Woman," cried I, "thou hast done very ill, and at another time my reproaches might have been more severe. Oh! what a tremendous gulf hast thou escaped, that would have buried both thee and him in endless ruin! Providence, indeed, has here been kinder to us than we to ourselves. It has reserved that son to be the father and protector of my children when I shall be away. How unjustly did I complain of being stripped of every comfort, when still I hear that he is happy, and insensible of our afflictions; still kept in reserve to support his widowed mother, and to protect his brothers and sisters!— But what sisters has he left? he has no sisters nów; they are all gone,

robbed from me, and I am undone!" "Father," interrupted my son, "I beg you will give me leave to read this letter: I know it will please you" Upon which, with my permission, he read as follows :—

"HONOURED SIR,—

"I have called off my imagination a few moments from the pleasures that surround me, to fix it upon objects that are still more pleasing—the dear little fireside at home. My fancy draws that harmless group as listening to every line of this with great composure. I view those faces with delight, which never felt the deforming hand of ambition or distress. But whatever your happiness may be at home, I am sure it will be some addition to it to hear that I am perfectly pleased with my situation, and every way happy here.

"Our regiment is countermanded, and is not to leave the kingdom; the colonel, who professes himself my friend, takes me with him to all companies where he is acquainted, and, after my first visit, I generally find myself received with increased respect upon repeating it. I danced last night with Lady G——, and, could I forget you know whom, I might perhaps be successful. But it is my fate still to remember others, while I am myself forgotten by most of my absent friends, and in this number I fear, sir, that I must consider you, for I have long expected the pleasure of a letter from home to no purpose. Olivia and Sophia, too, promised to write, but seem to have forgotten me. Tell them that they are two arrant little baggages, and that I am at this moment in a most violent passion with them; yet still, I know not how, though I want to bluster a little, my heart is respondent only to softer emotions. Then tell them, sir, that after all I love them affectionately; and be assured of my ever remaining

YOUR DUTIFUL SON.

"In all our miseries," cried I, "what thanks have we not to return, that one at least of our family is exempted from what we suffer! Heaven be his guard, and keep my boy thus happy, to be the support of his widowed mother, and the father of these two babes, which is all the patrimony I can now bequeath him! May he keep their innocence from the temptations of want, and be their conductor in the paths of honour!" I had scarcely said these words, when a noise like that of a tumult seemed to proceed from the prison below; it died away soon after, and a clanking of fetters was heard along the passage that led to my apartment. The keeper of the prison entered, holding a man all bloody, wounded, and fettered with the heaviest irons. I looked with compassion upon the wretch as he approached me, but with horror when I found it was my own son! "My George! my George! and do I behold thee thus! wounded! fettered? Is this thy happiness? Is this the manner you return to me? Oh, that this sight would break my heart at once, and let me die!"

"Where, sir, is your fortitude?" returned my son, with an intrepid voice; "I must suffer: my life is forfeited, and let them take it."

I tried to restrain my passion for a few minutes in silence, but I

thought I should have died with the effort. "Oh, my boy, my heart weeps to behold thee thus, and I cannot, cannot help it! In the moment that I thought thee blest, and prayed for thy safety, to behold thee thus again, chained, wounded! And yet the death of the youthful is happy. But I am old, a very old man, and have lived to see this day; to see my children all untimely falling about me, while I continue a wretched survivor in the midst of ruin! May all the curses that ever sunk a soul fall heavy upon the murderer of my children! May he live, like me, to see——"

"Hold, sir," replied my son, "or I shall blush for thee. How, sir! forgetful of your age, your holy calling, thus to arrogate the justice of Heaven, and fling those curses upward that must soon descend to crush thy own grey head with destruction! No, sir, let it be your care now to fit me for that vile death I must shortly suffer, to arm me with hope and resolution, to give me courage to drink of that bitterness which must shortly be my portion."

"My child, you must not die! I am sure no offence of thine can deserve so vile a punishment. My George could never be guilty of any crime to make his ancestors ashamed of him."

"Mine, sir," returned my son, "is, I fear, an unpardonable one. When I received my mother's letter from home, I immediately came down, determined to punish the betrayer of our honour, and sent him an order to meet me, which he answered, not in person, but by dispatching four of his domestics to seize me. I wounded one who first assaulted me, and I fear desperately; but the rest made me their prisoner. The coward is determined to put the law in execution against me; the proofs are undeniable: I have sent a challenge, and as I am the first aggressor upon the statute, I see no hopes of pardon. But you have often charmed me with your lessons of fortitude; let me now, sir, find them in your example."

"And, my son, you shall find them. I am now raised above this world, and all the pleasures it can produce. From this moment I break from my heart all the ties that held it down to earth, and will prepare to fit us both for eternity. Yes, my son, I will point out the way, and my soul shall guide yours in the ascent, for we will take our flight together. I now see and am convinced you can expect no pardon here, and I can only exhort you to seek it at that greatest tribunal where we both shall shortly answer. But let us not be niggardly in our exhortations, but let all our fellow-prisoners have a

share. Good gaoler, let them be permitted to stand here, while I attempt to improve them." Thus saying, I made an effort to rise from my straw, but wanted strength, and was able only to recline against the wall. The prisoners assembled themselves according to my directions, for they loved to hear my counsel; my son and his mother supported me on either side; I looked and saw that none were wanting, and then addressed them with the following exhortation.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE EQUAL DEALINGS OF PROVIDENCE DEMONSTRATED WITH REGARD TO THE HAPPY AND THE MISERABLE HERE BELOW. THAT FROM THE NATURE OF PLEASURE AND PAIN, THE WRETCHED MUST BE REPAID THE BALANCE OF THEIR SUFFERINGS IN THE LIFE HEREAFTER.

MY friends, my children, and fellow-sufferers, when I reflect on the distribution of good and evil, here below, I find that much has been given man to enjoy, yet still more to suffer. Though we should examine the whole world, we shall not find one man so happy as to have nothing left to wish for: but we daily see thousands who by suicide show us they have nothing left to hope. In this life, then, it appears that we cannot be entirely blest; but yet we may be completely miserable.

"Why man should thus feel pain; why our wretchedness should be requisite in the formation of universal felicity; why, when all other systems are made perfect by the perfection of their subordinate parts, the great system should require for its perfection parts that are not only subordinate to others, but imperfect in themselves—these are questions that never can be explained, and might be useless if known. On this subject Providence has thought fit to elude our curiosity, satisfied with granting us motives to consolation.

"In this situation, man has called in the friendly assistance of philosophy; and Heaven, seeing the incapacity of that to console him, has given him the aid of religion. The consolations of philosophy are very amusing, but often fallacious. It tells us that life is filled with comforts, if we will but enjoy them; and on the other hand, that

THE SERMON IN PRISON

though we unavoidably have miseries here, life is short, and they will soon be over. Thus do these consolations destroy each other; for if life is a place of comfort, its shortness must be misery; and if it be long, our griefs are protracted. Thus philosophy is weak; but religion comforts in a higher strain. Man is here, it tells us, fitting up his mind, and preparing it for another abode. When the good man leaves the body, and is all a glorious mind, he will find he has been making himself a heaven of happiness here; while the wretch that has been maimed and contaminated by his vices shrinks from his body with terror, and finds that he has anticipated the vengeance of Heaven. To religion, then, we must hold in every circumstance of life for our truest comfort; for, if already we are happy, it is a pleasure to think that we can make that happiness unending; and, if we are miserable, it is very consoling to think that there is a place of rest. Thus, to the fortunate, religion holds out a continuance of bliss; to the wretched, a change from pain.

"But though religion is very kind to all men, it has promised peculiar rewards to the unhappy; the sick, the naked, the houseless, the heavy-laden, and the prisoner, have ever most frequent promises in our sacred law. The Author of our religion everywhere professes himself the wretch's friend; and, unlike the false ones of this world, bestows all his caresses upon the forlorn. The unthinking have censured this as partiality, as a preference without merit to deserve it. But they never reflect, that it is not in the power even of Heaven itself to make the offer of unceasing felicity as great a gift to the happy as to the miserable. To the first, eternity is but a single blessing, since, at most, it but increases what they already possess. To the latter, it is a double advantage; for it diminishes their pain here and rewards them with heavenly bliss hereafter.

"But Providence is in another respect kinder to the poor than to the rich; for as it thus makes the life after death more desirable, so it smooths the passage there. The wretched have had a long familiarity with every face of terror The man of sorrow lays himself quietly down, with no possessions to regret, and but few ties to stop his departure; he feels only nature's pang in the final separation, and this is no way greater than he has often fainted under before; for, after a certain degree of pain, every new breach that death opens in the constitution, nature kindly covers with insensibility.

"Thus Providence has given to the wretched two advantages over

the happy in this life—greater felicity in dying, and in heaven all that superiority of pleasure which arises from contrasted enjoyment. And this superiority, my friends, is no small advantage, and seems to be one of the pleàsures of the poor man in the parable; for though he was already in heaven, and felt all the raptures it could give, yet it was mentioned as an addition to his happiness, that he had once been wretched, and now was comforted; that he had known what it was to be miserable, and now felt what it was to be happy.

"Thus, my friends, you see religion does what philosophy could never do: it shows the equal dealings of Heaven to the happy and the unhappy, and levels all human enjoyments to nearly the same standard. It gives to both rich and poor the same happiness hereafter, and equal hopes to aspire after it; but if the rich have the advantage of enjoying pleasure here, the poor have the endless satisfaction of knowing what it was once to be miserable, when crowned with endless felicity hereafter; and even though this should be called a small advantage, yet, being an eternal one, it must make up by duration what the temporal happiness of the great may have exceeded by intenseness.

"These are, therefore, the consolations which the wretched have peculiar to themselves, and in which they are above the rest of mankind; in other respects they are below them. They who would know the miseries of the poor must see life and endure it. To declaim on the temporal advantages they enjoy, is only repeating what none either believe or practise. The men who have the necessaries of living are not poor; and they who want them must be miserable. Yes, my friends, we must be miserable. No vain efforts of a refined imagination can soothe the wants of nature, can give elastic sweetness to the dank vapour of a dungeon, or ease to the throbbings of a broken heart. Let the philosopher from his couch of softness tell us that we can resist all these. Alas! the effort by which we resist them is still the greatest pain. Death is slight, and any man may sustain it; but torments are dreadful, and these no man can endure.

"To us, then, my friends, the promises of happiness in heaven should be peculiarly dear, for if our reward be in this life alone, we are, indeed, of all men the most miserable. When I look round these gloomy walls, made to terrify, as well as to confine us; this light, that only serves to show the horrors of the place; those shackles, that tyranny has imposed, or crime made necessary; when I survey these

emaciated looks, and hear those groans:—oh, my friends, what a glorious exchange would heaven be for these! To fly through regions unconfined as air—to bask in the sunshine of eternal bliss—to carol over endless hymns of praise—to have no master to threaten or insult us, but the form of Goodness himself for ever in our eyes: when I think of these things, death becomes the messenger of very glad tidings; when I think of these things, his sharpest arrow becomes the staff of my support; when I think of these things, what is there in life worth having? when I think of these things, what is there that should not be spurned away? Kings in their palaces should groan for such advantages; but we, humbled as we are, should yearn for them.

"And shall these things be ours? Ours they will certainly be, if we but try for them; and what is a comfort, we are shut out from many temptations that would retard our pursuit. Only let us try for them, and they will certainly be ours; and what is still a comfort, shortly too; for if we look back on a past life, it appears but a very short span; and whatever we may think of the rest of life, it will yet be found of less duration: as we grow older, the days seem to grow shorter, and our intimacy with time ever lessens the perception of his stay. Then let us take comfort now, for we shall soon be at our journey's end; we shall soon lay down the heavy burden laid by Heaven upon us; and though death, the only friend of the wretched, for a little while mocks the weary traveller with the view, and, like the horizon, still flies before him, yet the time will certainly and shortly come when we shall cease from our toil; when the luxurious great ones of the world shall no more tread us to the earth; when we shall think with pleasure of our sufferings below; when we shall be surrounded with all our friends, or such as deserved our friendship; when our bliss shall be unutterable, and still, to crown all, unending."

CHAPTER XXX.

HAPPIER PROSPECTS BEGIN TO APPEAR.—LET US BE INFLEXIBLE, AND FORTUNE WILL AT LAST CHANGE IN OUR FAVOUR.

WHEN I had thus finished, and my audience was retired, the gaoler, who was one of the most humane of his profession, hoped I would not be displeased, as what he did was but his duty; observing, that he must be obliged to remove my son into a stronger cell, but that he should be permitted to visit me every morning. I thanked him for his clemency, and grasping my boy's hand, bade him farewell, and be mindful of the great duty that was before him.

I again therefore laid me down, and one of my little ones sat by my bed-side reading, when Mr. Jenkinson, entering, informed me that there was news of my daughter; for that she was seen by a person, about two hours before, in a strange gentleman's company, and that

they had stopped at a neighbouring village for refreshment, and seemed as if returning to town. He had scarcely delivered this news, when the gaoler came, with looks of haste and pleasure, to inform me that my daughter was found! Moses came running in a moment after, crying out that his sister Sophy was below, and coming up with our old friend Mr. Burchell.

Just as he delivered this news my dearest girl entered, and, with looks almost wild with pleasure, ran to kiss me in a transport of affection. Her mother's tears and silence also showed her pleasure.

"Here, papa," cried the charming girl, "here is the brave man to whom I owe my delivery; to this gentleman's intrepidity I am indebted for my happiness and safety——" A kiss from Mr. Burchell, whose pleasure seemed even greater than hers, interrupted what she was going to add.

"Ah, Mr. Burchell!" cried I, "this is but a wretched habitation you now find us in; and we are now very different from what you last saw us. You were ever our friend: we have long discovered our errors with regard to you, and repented of our ingratitude. After the vile usage you then received at my hands, I am almost ashamed to behold your face; yet I hope you'll forgive me, as I was deceived by a base, ungenerous wretch, who under the mask of friendship has undone me."

"It is impossible," replied Mr. Burchell, "that I should forgive you, as you never deserved my resentment. I partly saw your delusion then, and, as it was out of my power to restrain, I could only pity it."

"It was ever my conjecture," cried I, "that your mind was noble; but now I find it so. But tell me, my dear child, how hast thou been relieved, or who the ruffians were that carried thee away."

"Indeed, sir," replied she, "as to the villain who carried me off I am yet ignorant. For as my mamma and I were walking out he came behind us, and almost before I could call for help, forced me into the post-chaise, and in an instant the horses drove away. I met several on the road to whom I cried out for assistance, but they disregarded my entreaties. In the meantime the ruffian himself used every art to hinder me from crying out; he flattered and threatened me by turns, and swore that, if I continued but silent, he intended no harm. In the meantime I had broken the canvas that he had drawn up, and whom should I perceive at some distance but your old friend Mr. Burchell, walking along with his usual swiftness, with the great stick for which we used so much to ridicule him! As soon as we came within hearing,

I called out to him by name, and entreated his help. I repeated my exclamation several times, upon which, with a very loud voice, he bade the postilion stop; but the boy took no notice, but drove on with still greater speed. I now thought he could never overtake us, when in less than a minute I saw Mr. Burchell come running up by the side of the horses, and with one blow knock the postilion to the ground. The horses, when he was fallen, soon stopped of themselves, and the ruffian stepping out, with oaths and menaces, drew his sword, and ordered him, at his peril, to retire; but Mr. Burchell, running up, shivered his sword to pieces, and then pursued him for near a quarter of a mile; but he made his escape. I was by this time come out myself, willing to assist my deliverer; but he soon returned to me in triumph. The postilion, who was recovered, was going to make his escape too: but Mr. Burchell ordered him, at his peril, to mount again, and drive back to town. Finding it impossible to resist, he reluctantly complied, though the wound he had received seemed to me at least to be dangerous. He continued to complain of the pain as we drove along, so that he at last excited Mr. Burchell's compassion; who, at my request, exchanged him for another at an inn where we called on our return."

"Welcome, then," cried I, "my child! and thou her gallant deliverer, a thousand welcomes! Though our cheer is but wretched, yet our hearts are ready to receive you. And now, Mr. Burchell, as you have delivered my girl, if you think her a recompense, she is yours: if you can stoop to an alliance with a family so poor as mine, take her; obtain her consent, as I know you have her heart, and you have mine. And let me tell you, sir, that I give you no small treasure; she has been celebrated for beauty, it is true; but that is not my meaning: I give you a treasure in her mind."

"But I suppose, sir," cried Mr. Burchell, "that you are apprised of my circumstances, and of my incapacity to support her as she deserves?"

"If your present objection," replied I, "be meant as an evasion of my offer, I desist; but I know no man so worthy to deserve her as you; and if I could give her thousands, and thousands sought her from me, yet my honest, brave Burchell should be my dearest choice!"

To all this his silence alone seemed to give a mortifying refusal; and, without the least reply to my offer, he demanded if he could not be furnished with refreshments from the next inn; to which, being

Mr BURCHELL SAVES SOPHIA.

answered in the affirmative, he ordered them to send in the best dinner that could be provided upon such short notice. He bespoke also a dozen of their best wine, and some cordials for me; adding, with a smile, that he would stretch a little for once; and though in a prison, he was never better disposed to be merry. The waiter soon made his appearance with preparations for dinner; a table was lent us by the gaoler, who seemed remarkably assiduous; the wine was disposed in order, and two very well-dressed dishes were brought in.

My daughter had not yet heard of her poor brother's melancholy situation, and we all seemed unwilling to damp her cheerfulness by the relation. But it was in vain that I attempted to appear cheerful, the circumstances of my unfortunate son broke through all efforts to dissemble; so that I was at last obliged to damp our mirth by relating his misfortunes, and wishing he might be permitted to share with us in this little interval of satisfaction. After my guests were recovered from the consternation my account had produced, I requested also that Mr. Jenkinson, a fellow-prisoner, might be admitted; and the gaoler granted my request with an air of unusual submission. The clanking of my son's irons was no sooner heard along the passage than his sister ran impatiently to meet him; while Mr. Burchell, in the meantime, asked me if my son's name were George; to which replying in the affirmative, he still continued silent. As soon as my boy entered the room I could perceive he regarded Mr. Burchell with a look of astonishment and reverence. "Come on," cried I, "my son; though we are fallen very low, yet Providence has been pleased to grant us some small relaxation from pain. Thy sister is restored to us, and there is her deliverer; to that brave man it is that I am indebted for yet having a daughter; give him, my boy, the hand of friendship—he deserves our warmest gratitude."

My son seemed all this while regardless of what I said, and still continued fixed at a respectful distance. "My dear brother," cried his sister, "why don't you thank my good deliverer? the brave should ever love each other."

He still continued his silence and astonishment; till our guest at last perceived himself to be known, and assuming all his native dignity, desired my son to come forward. Never before had I seen anything so truly majestic as the air he assumed upon this occasion. The greatest object in the universe, says a certain philosopher, is a good man struggling with adversity; yet there is a still greater, which is the

good man that comes to relieve it. After he had regarded my son for some time with a superior air, "I again find," said he, "unthinking boy, that the same crime——" But here he was interrupted by one of the gaoler's servants, who came to inform us that a person of distinction, who had driven into town with a chariot and several attendants, sent his respects to the gentleman that was with us, and begged to know when he should think proper to be waited upon. "Bid the fellow wait," cried our guest, "till I shall have leisure to receive him:" and then turning to my son, "I again find, sir," proceeded he, "that you are guilty of the same offence for which you once had my reproof, and for which the law is now preparing its justest punishments. You imagine, perhaps, that a contempt for your own life gives you a right to take that of another: but where, sir, is the difference between the duellist, who hazards a life of no value, and the murderer, who acts with greater security? Is it any diminution of the gamester's fraud when he alleges that he has staked a counter?"

"Alas, sir!" cried I, "whoever you are, pity the poor misguided creature: for what he has done was in obedience to a deluded mother, who, in the bitterness of her resentment, required him, upon her blessing, to avenge her quarrel. Here, sir, is the letter, which will serve to convince you of her imprudence, and diminish his guilt."

He took the letter, and hastily read it over. "This," said he, though not a perfect excuse, is such a palliation of his fault as induces me to forgive him. And now, sir," continued he, kindly taking my son by the hand, "I see you are surprised at finding me here; but I have often visited prisons upon occasions less interesting. I am now come to see justice done a worthy man, for whom I have the most sincere esteem. I have long been a disguised spectator of thy father's benevolence. I have at his little dwelling enjoyed respect uncontaminated by flattery, and have received that happiness which courts could not give, from the amusing simplicity round his fire-side. My nephew has been apprised of my intention of coming here, and I find is arrived; it would be wronging him and you to condemn him without examination; if there be injury, there shall be redress; and this I may say without boasting, that none have ever taxed the injustice of Sir William Thornhill."

We now found that the personage whom we had so long entertained as a harmless, amusing companion, was no other than the celebrated Sir William Thornhill, to whose virtues and singularities scarcely any

were strangers. The poor Mr. Burchell was in reality a man of large fortune and great interest, to whom senates listened with applause, and whom party heard with conviction; who was the friend of his country, but loyal to his king. My poor wife, recollecting her former familiarity, seemed to shrink with apprehension; but Sophia, who a few moments before thought him her own, now perceiving the immense distance to which he was removed by fortune, was unable to conceal her tears.

"Ah, sir!" cried my wife, with a piteous aspect, "how is it possible that I can ever have your forgiveness? the slights you received from me the last time I had the honour of seeing you at our house, and the jokes which I so audaciously threw out—these, sir, I fear, can never be forgiven."

"My dear good lady," returned he, with a smile, "if you had your joke, I had my answer. I'll leave it to all the company if mine were not as good as yours. To say the truth, I know nobody whom I am disposed to be angry with at present but the fellow who so frightened my little girl here. I had not even time to examine the rascal's person so as to describe him in an advertisement. Can you tell me, Sophia, my dear, whether you should know him again?"

"Indeed, sir," replied she, "I cannot be positive; yet, now I recollect, he had a large mark over one of his eyebrows." "I ask pardon, madam," interrupted Jenkinson, who was by, "but be so good as to inform me if the fellow wore his own red hair." "Yes, I think so," cried Sophia. "And did your honour," continued he, turning to Sir William, "observe the length of his legs?" "I can't be sure of their length," cried the baronet; "but I am convinced of their swiftness; for he outran me, which is what I thought few men in the kingdom could have done." "Please your honour," cried Jenkinson, "I know the man; it is certainly the same; the best runner in England; he has beaten Pinwire, of Newcastle; Timothy Baxter is his name: I know him perfectly, and the very place of his retreat this moment. If your honour will bid Mr. Gaoler let two of his men go with me, I'll engage to produce him to you in an hour at farthest." Upon this the gaoler was called, who instantly appearing, Sir William demanded if he knew him. "Yes, please your honour," replied the gaoler, "I know Sir William Thornhill well; and everybody that knows anything of him will desire to know more of him." "Well, then," said the baronet, "my request is, that you will permit this man and two of

your servants to go upon a message by my authority, and as I am in the commission of the peace, I undertake to secure you." "Your promise is sufficient," replied the other; "and you may, at a minute's warning, send them over England whenever your honour thinks fit."

In pursuance of the gaoler's compliance, Jenkinson was dispatched in pursuit of Timothy Baxter, while we were amused with the assiduity of our youngest boy, Bill, who had just come in and climbed up to Sir William's neck in order to kiss him. His mother was immediately going to chastise his familiarity, but the worthy man prevented her; and taking the child, all ragged as he was, upon his knee, "What, Bill, you chubby rogue!" cried he, "do you remember your old friend Burchell? And Dick, too, my honest veteran, are you here? you shall find I have not forgot you." So saying, he gave each a large piece of gingerbread, which the poor fellows ate very heartily, as they had got that morning but a very scanty breakfast.

We now sat down to dinner, which was almost cold; but previously, my arm still continuing painful, Sir William wrote a prescription, for he had made the study of physic his amusement, and was more than moderately skilled in the profession: this being sent to an apothecary, who lived in the place, my arm was dressed, and I found almost instantaneous relief. We were waited upon at dinner by the gaoler himself, who was willing to do our guest all the honour in his power. But before we had well dined, another message was brought from his nephew, desiring permission to appear, in order to vindicate his innocence and honour; with which request the baronet complied, and desired Mr. Thornhill to be introduced.

CHAPTER XXXI.

FORMER BENEVOLENCE NOW REPAID WITH UNEXPECTED INTEREST.

MR. THORNHILL made his entrance with a smile, which he seldom wanted, and was going to embrace his uncle, which the other repulsed with an air of disdain. "No fawning, sir, at present," cried the baronet, with a look of severity; "the only way to my heart is by the road of honour; but here I only see complicated instances of falsehood, cowardice, and oppression. How is it, sir, that this poor man, for whom I know you professed a friendship, is used thus hardly? His daughter vilely seduced as a recompense for his hospitality, and he himself thrown into prison, perhaps but for resenting the insult; his son, too, whom you feared to face as a man——

"Is it possible, sir," interrupted his nephew, "that my uncle should

object that as a crime which his repeated instructions alone have persuaded me to avoid?"

"Your rebuke," cried Sir William, "is just; you have acted in this instance prudently and well, though not quite as your father would have done; my brother, indeed, was the soul of honour, but thou—yes, you have acted in this instance perfectly right, and it has my warmest approbation."

"And I hope," said his nephew, "that the rest of my conduct will not be found to deserve censure. I appeared, sir, with this gentleman's daughter at some places of public amusement; thus, what was levity, scandal called by a harsher name, and it was reported that I had debauched her. I waited on her father in person, willing to clear the thing to his satisfaction, and he received me only with insult and abuse. As for the rest, with regard to his being here, my attorney and steward can best inform you, as I commit the management of business entirely to them. If he has contracted debts, and is unwilling, or even unable, to pay them, it is their business to proceed in this manner; and I see no hardship or injustice in pursuing the most legal means of redress."

"If this," cried Sir William, "be as you have stated it, there is nothing unpardonable in your offences; and though your conduct might have been more generous in not suffering this gentleman to be oppressed by subordinate tyranny, yet it has been at least equitable."

"He cannot contradict a single particular," replied the squire; "I defy him to do so, and several of my servants are ready to attest what I say. Thus, sir," continued he, finding that I was silent, for in fact I could not contradict him; "thus, sir, my own innocence is vindicated: but though at your entreaty I am ready to forgive this gentleman every other offence, yet his attempts to lessen me in your esteem excite a resentment that I cannot govern; and this, too, at a time when his son was actually preparing to take away my life: this, I say, was such guilt that I am determined to let the law take its course. I have here the challenge that was sent me, and two witnesses to prove it; one of my servants has been wounded dangerously; and even though my uncle himself should dissuade me, which I know he will not, yet I will see public justice done, and he shall suffer for it."

"Thou monster!" cried my wife, "hast thou not had vengeance enough already, but must my poor boy feel thy cruelty? I hope

that good Sir William will protect us, for my son is as innocent as a child; I am sure he is, and never did harm to man."

"Madam," replied the good man, "your wishes for his safety are not greater than mine; but I am sorry to find his guilt too plain; and if my nephew persists——" But the appearance of Jenkinson and the gaoler's two servants now called off our attention, who entered hauling in a tall man, very genteelly dressed, and answering the description already given of the ruffian who had carried off my daughter. "Here," cried Jenkinson, pulling him in, "here we have him: and, if ever there was a candidate for Tyburn, this is one."

The moment Mr. Thornhill perceived the prisoner, and Jenkinson, who had him in custody, he seemed to shrink backward with terror. His face became pale with conscious guilt, and he would have withdrawn; but Jenkinson, who perceived his design, stopped him. "What! squire," cried he, "are you ashamed of your two old acquaintances, Jenkinson and Baxter? But this is the way that all great men forget their friends, though I am resolved we will not forget you. Our prisoner, please your honour," continued he, turning to Sir William, "has already confessed all. This is the gentleman reported to be so dangerously wounded; he declares that it was Mr. Thornhill who first put him upon this affair; that he gave him the clothes he now wears to appear like a gentleman, and furnished him with the post-chaise. The plan was laid between them that he should carry off the young lady to a place of safety, and that there he should threaten and terrify her; but Mr. Thornhill was to come in in the meantime, as if by accident, to her rescue, and that they should fight awhile, and then he was to run off, by which Mr. Thornhill would have the better opportunity of gaining her affections himself under the character of her defender."

Sir William remembered the coat to have been frequently worn by his nephew, and all the rest the prisoner himself confirmed by a more circumstantial account; concluding, that Mr. Thornhill had often declared to him that he was in love with both sisters at the same time.

"Heavens!" cried Sir William, "what a viper have I been fostering in my bosom! And so fond of public justice, too, as he seemed to be! But he shall have it—secure him, Mr. Gaoler—yet hold, I fear there is no legal evidence to detain him."

Upon this, Mr. Thornhill, with the utmost humility, entreated that two such abandoned wretches might not be admitted as evidences

against him; but that his servants should be examined. "Your servants!" replied Sir William; "wretch! call them yours no longer; but come, let us hear what those fellows have to say; let his butler be called."

When the butler was introduced, he soon perceived by his former master's looks that all his power was now over. "Tell me," cried Sir William, sternly, "have you ever seen your master and that fellow dressed up in his clothes in company together?" "Yes, please your honour," cried the butler, "a thousand times: he was the man that always brought him his ladies." "How!" interrupted young Mr. Thornhill, "this to my face?" "Yes," replied the butler; "or to any man's face. To tell you a truth, Master Thornhill, I never either loved you or liked you, and I don't care if I tell you now a piece of my mind." "Now then," cried Jenkinson, "tell his honour whether you know anything of me." "I can't say," replied the butler, "that I know much good of you. The night that gentleman's daughter was deluded to our house, you were one of them." "So, then," cried Sir William, "I find you have brought a very fine witness to prove your innocence; thou stain to humanity! to associate with such wretches! But," continuing his examination, "you tell me, Mr. Butler, that this was the person who brought him this old gentleman's daughter." "No, please your honour," replied the butler, "he did not bring her, for the squire himself undertook that business: but he brought the priest that pretended to marry them."

"It is but too true," cried Jenkinson; "I cannot deny it; that was the employment assigned to me; and I confess it to my confusion."

"Good Heavens!" exclaimed the worthy baronet, "how every new discovery of his villany alarms me! All his guilt is now too plain, and I find his present prosecution was dictated by tyranny, cowardice, and revenge: at my request, Mr. Gaoler, set this young officer, now your prisoner, free, and trust to me for the consequences. I'll make it my business to set the affair in a proper light to my friend the magistrate who has committed him. But where is the unfortunate young lady herself? Let her appear, to confront this wretch; I long to know by what arts he has seduced her. Entreat her to come in. Where is she?"

"Ah! sir," said I, "that question stings me to the heart; I was once indeed happy in a daughter, but her miseries——" Another

MISS WILMOT UNDECEIVED.

interruption here prevented me; for who should make her appearance but Miss Arabella Wilmot, who was the next day to have been married to Mr. Thornhill. Nothing could equal her surprise at seeing Sir William and his nephew here before her; for her arrival was quite accidental. It happened that she and the old gentleman, her father, were passing through the town, on their way to her aunt's, who had insisted that her nuptials with Mr. Thornhill should be consummated at her house: but, stopping for refreshment, they put up at an inn at the other end of the town. It was there, from the window, that the young lady happened to observe one of my little boys playing in the street, and, instantly sending a footman to bring the child to her, she learnt from him some account of our misfortunes, but was still kept ignorant of young Mr. Thornhill's being the cause. Though her father made several remonstrances on the impropriety of her going to a prison to visit us, yet they were ineffectual; she desired the child to conduct her, which he did: and it was thus she surprised us at a juncture so unexpected.

Nor can I go on without a reflection on those accidental meetings, which, though they happen every day, seldom excite our surprise but upon some extraordinary occasion. To what a fortuitous concurrence do we not owe every pleasure and convenience of our lives! How many seeming accidents must unite before we can be clothed or fed! The peasant must be disposed to labour, the shower must fall, the wind fill the merchant's sail; or numbers must want the usual supply.

We all continued silent for some moments, while my charming pupil, which was the name I generally gave this young lady, united in her looks compassion and astonishment, which gave new finishing to her beauty. "Indeed, my dear Mr. Thornhill," cried she to the squire, who she supposed was come here to succour and not to oppress us, "I take it a little unkindly that you should come here without me, or never inform me of the situation of a family so dear to us both; you know I should take as much pleasure in contributing to the relief of my reverend old master here, whom I shall ever esteem, as you can. But I find that, like your uncle, you take a pleasure in doing good in secret."

"He find pleasure in doing good!" cried Sir William, interrupting her: "no, my dear, his pleasures are as base as he is. You see in him, madam, as complete a villain as ever disgraced humanity. A wretch who, after having deluded this poor man's daughter, after plotting against the innocence of her sister, has thrown the father into

prison, and the eldest son into fetters, because he had the courage to face her betrayer! And give me leave, madam, now to congratulate you upon an escape from the embraces of such a monster."

"Oh, goodness!" cried the lovely girl, "how have I been deceived! Mr. Thornhill informed me, for certain, that this gentleman's eldest son, Captain Primrose, was gone off to America with his new-married lady."

"My sweetest miss," cried my wife, "he has told you nothing but falsehoods. My son George never left the kingdom, nor ever was married. Though you have forsaken him, he has always loved you too well to think of anybody else: and I have heard him say he would die a bachelor for your sake." She then proceeded to expatiate upon the sincerity of her son's passion; she set his duel with Mr. Thornhill in a proper light, from thence she made a rapid digression to the squire's debaucheries, his pretended marriages, and ended with a most insulting picture of his cowardice.

"Good Heaven!" cried Miss Wilmot, "how very near have I been to the brink of ruin! but how great is my pleasure to have escaped it! Ten thousand falsehoods has this gentleman told me! He had at last art enough to persuade me that my promise to the only man I esteemed was no longer binding, since he had been unfaithful. By his falsehoods I was taught to detest one equally brave and generous."

By this time my son was freed from the incumbrances of justice, as the person supposed to be wounded was detected to be an impostor. Mr. Jenkinson also, who had acted as his valet-de-chambre, had dressed up his hair, and furnished him with whatever was necessary to make a genteel appearance. He now, therefore, entered, handsomely dressed in his regimentals, and without vanity (for I am above it) he appeared as handsome a fellow as ever wore a military dress. As he entered, he made Miss Wilmot a modest and distant bow, for he was not as yet acquainted with the change which the eloquence of his mother had wrought in his favour. But no decorums could restrain the impatience of his blushing mistress to be forgiven. Her tears, her looks, all contributed to discover the real sensations of her heart, for having forgotten her former promise, and having suffered herself to be deluded by an impostor. My son appeared amazed at her condescension, and could scarcely believe it real. "Sure, madam," cried he, "this is but delusion; I can never have merited this! To be blest thus is to be too happy!" "No, sir," replied she, "I have been

deceived, basely deceived, else nothing could have ever made me unjust to my promise. You know my friendship, you have long known it: but forget what I have done; and, as you once had my warmest vows of constancy, you shall now have them repeated; and be assured, that if your Arabella cannot be yours, she shall never be another's." "And no other's you shall be," cried Sir William, "if I have any influence with your father."

This hint was sufficient for my son Moses, who immediately flew to the inn where the old gentleman was, to inform him of every circumstance that had happened. But in the meantime the squire, perceiving that he was on every side undone, now finding that no hopes were left from flattery or dissimulation, concluded that his wisest way would be to turn and face his pursuers. Thus laying aside all shame, he appeared the open, hardy villain. "I find then," cried he, "that I am to expect no justice here; but I am resolved it shall be done me. You shall know, sir," turning to Sir William, "I am no longer a poor dependant upon your favours. I scorn them. Nothing can keep Miss Wilmot's fortune from me, which, I thank her father's assiduity, is pretty large. The articles and a bond for her fortune are signed, and safe in my possession. It was her fortune, not her person, that induced me to wish for this match; and, possessed of the one, let who will take the other."

This was an alarming blow: Sir William was sensible of the justice of his claims, for he had been instrumental in drawing up the marriage-articles himself. Miss Wilmot, therefore, perceiving that her fortune was irretrievably lost, turning to my son, asked if the loss of fortune could lessen her value to him. "Though fortune," said she, "is out of my power, at least I have my hand to give."

"And that, madam," cried her real lover, "was indeed all that you ever had to give; at least, all that I ever thought worth the acceptance. And I now protest, my Arabella, by all that's happy, your want of fortune this moment increases my pleasure, as it serves to convince my sweet girl of my sincerity."

Mr. Wilmot now entering, he seemed not a little pleased at the danger his daughter had just escaped, and readily consented to a dissolution of the match. But finding that her fortune, which was secured to Mr. Thornhill by bond, would not be given up, nothing could exceed his disappointment. He now saw that his money must all go to enrich one who had no fortune of his own. He could bear

his being a rascal, but to want an equivalent to his daughter's fortune was wormwood. He sat, therefore, for some minutes employed in the most mortifying speculations, till Sir William attempted to lessen his anxiety. "I must confess, sir," cried he, "that your present disappointment does not entirely displease me. Your immoderate passion for wealth is now justly punished. But though the young lady cannot be rich, she has still a competence sufficient to give content. Here you see an honest young soldier, who is willing to take her without fortune; they have long loved each other; and, for the friendship I bear his father, my interest shall not be wanting in his promotion. Leave, then, that ambition which disappoints you, and for once admit that happiness which courts your acceptance."

"Sir William," replied the old gentleman, "be assured I never yet forced her inclinations, nor will I now. If she still continues to love this young gentleman, let her have him with all my heart. There is still, thank Heaven, some fortune left, and your promise will make it something more. Only let my old friend here" (meaning me) "give

me a promise of settling six thousand pounds upon my girl, if ever he should come to his fortune, and I am ready this night to be the first to join them together."

As it now remained with me to make the young couple happy, I readily gave a promise of making the settlement he required; which, to one who had such little expectations as I, was no great favour. We had now, therefore, the satisfaction of seeing them fly into each other's arms in a transport. "After all my misfortunes," cried my son George, "to be thus rewarded: Sure this is more than I could ever have presumed to hope for. To be possessed of all that's good, and after such an interval of pain! my warmest wishes could never rise so high!" "Yes, my George," returned his lovely bride, "now let the wretch take my fortune: since you are happy without it, so am I. Oh, what an exchange have I made from the basest of men to the dearest, best! Let him enjoy our fortune; I now can be happy even in indigence." "And I promise you," cried the squire, with a malicious grin, "that I shall be very happy with what you despise." "Hold, hold, sir!" cried Jenkinson; "there are two words to that bargain. As for that lady's fortune, sir, you shall never touch a single stiver of it. Pray, your honour," continued he to Sir William, "can the squire have this lady's fortune if he be married to another?" "How can you make such a simple demand?" replied the baronet: "undoubtedly he cannot." "I am sorry for that," cried Jenkinson: "for as this gentleman and I have been old fellow-sporters, I have a friendship for him. But I must declare, well as I love him, that his contract is not worth a tobacco-stopper, for he is married already." "You lie like a rascal," returned the squire, who seemed roused by this insult; "I never was legally married to any woman." "Indeed, begging your honour's pardon," replied the other, "you were; and I hope you will show a proper return of friendship to your own honest Jenkinson, who brings you a wife; and if the company restrain their curiosity a few minutes, they shall see her." So saying, he went off with his usual celerity, and left us all unable to form any probable conjecture as to his design. "Ay, let him go," cried the squire; "whatever else I may have done, I defy him there. I am too old now to be frightened with squibs."

"I am surprised," said the baronet, "what the fellow can intend by this. Some low piece of humour, I suppose." "Perhaps, sir," replied I, "he may have a more serious meaning. For when we reflect on

the various schemes this gentleman has laid to seduce innocence, perhaps some one, more artful than the rest, has been found able to deceive him. When we consider what numbers he has ruined, how many parents now feel with anguish the infamy and the contamination which he has brought into their families, it would not surprise me if some one of them—— Amazement! Do I see my lost daughter? Do I hold her? It is, it is my life, my happiness! I thought thee lost, my Olivia, yet still I hold thee, and still thou shalt live to bless me." The warmest transports of the fondest lover were not greater than mine, when I saw him introduce my child, and held my daughter in my arms, whose silence only spoke her raptures. "And art thou returned to me, my darling?" cried I, "to be my comfort in age!" "That she is," cried Jenkinson, "and make much of her, for she is your own honourable child, and as honest a woman as any in the whole room, let the other be who she will. And as for you, squire, as sure as you stand there, this young lady is your lawful wedded wife: and, to convince you that I speak nothing but the truth, here is the licence by which you were married together." So saying, he put the licence into the baronet's hands, who read it, and found it perfect in every respect. "And now, gentlemen," continued he, "I find you are surprised at all this; but a very few words will explain the difficulty. That there squire of renown, for whom I have a great friendship, but that's between ourselves, has often employed me in doing odd little things for him. Among the rest he commissioned me to procure him a false licence, and a false priest, in order to deceive this young lady. But as I was very much his friend, what did I do, but went and got a true licence and a true priest, and married them both as fast as the cloth could make them. Perhaps you'll think it was generosity made me do all this. But, no. To my shame I confess it, my only design was to keep the licence, and let the squire know that I could prove it upon him whenever I thought proper, and so make him come down whenever I wanted money." A burst of pleasure now seemed to fill the whole apartment; our joy even reached the common room, where the prisoners themselves sympathised,

"And shook their chains
In transport and rude harmony."

Happiness was expanded upon every face, and even Olivia's cheeks seemed flushed with pleasure. To be thus restored to reputation, to

THE MARRIAGE LICENSE

friends and fortune at once, was a rapture sufficient to stop the progress of decay, and restore former health and vivacity. But, perhaps, among all, there was not one who felt sincerer pleasure than I. Still holding the dear-loved child in my arms, I asked my heart if these transports were not delusion. "How could you," cried I, turning to Jenkinson, "how could you add to my miseries by the story of her death? But it matters not: my pleasure at finding her again is more than a recompense for the pain."

"As to your question," replied Jenkinson, "that is easily answered. I thought the only probable means of freeing you from prison was by submitting to the squire, and consenting to his marriage with the other young lady. But these you had vowed never to grant while your daughter was living; there was, therefore, no other method to bring things to bear, but by persuading you that she was dead. I prevailed on your wife to join in the deceit, and we have not had a fit opportunity of undeceiving you till now."

In the whole assembly there now appeared only two faces that did not glow with transport. Mr. Thornhill's assurance had entirely forsaken him; he now saw the gulf of infamy and want before him, and trembled to take the plunge. He therefore fell on his knees before his uncle, and in a voice of piercing misery implored compassion. Sir William was going to spurn him away, but at my request he raised him, and after pausing a few moments, "Thy vices, crimes, and ingratitude," cried he, "deserve no tenderness; yet thou shalt not be entirely forsaken; a bare competence shall be supplied to support the wants of life, but not its follies. This young lady, thy wife, shall be put in possession of a third part of that fortune which once was thine; and from her tenderness alone thou art to expect any extraordinary supplies for the future." He was going to express his gratitude for such kindness in a set speech; but the baronet prevented him, by bidding him not aggravate his meanness, which was already but too apparent. He ordered him at the same time to be gone, and from all his former domestics to choose one, and such as he should think proper, which was all that should be granted to attend him.

As soon as he left us, Sir William very politely stepped up to his new niece with a smile, and wished her joy. His example was followed by Miss Wilmot and her father; my wife, too, kissed her daughter with much affection, as, to use her own expression, she was now made an honest woman of. Sophia and Moses followed in turn, and

even our benefactor Jenkinson desired to be admitted to that honour. Our satisfaction seemed scarcely capable of increase. Sir William, whose greatest pleasure was in doing good, now looked round with a countenance open as the sun, and saw nothing but joy in the looks of all, except that of my daughter Sophia, who, for some reasons we could not comprehend, did not seem perfectly satisfied. "I think now," cried he, with a smile, "that all the company, except one or two, seem perfectly happy. There only remains an act of justice for me to do. You are sensible, sir," continued he, turning to me, "of the obligations we both owe to Mr. Jenkinson; and it is but just we should both reward him for it. Miss Sophia will, I am sure, make him very happy, and he shall have five hundred pounds as her fortune; and upon this I am sure they can live very comfortably together. Come, Miss Sophia, what say you to this match of my making? will you have him?" My poor girl seemed almost sinking into her mother's arms at the hideous proposal. "Have him, sir!" cried she, faintly: "no, sir, never!" "What!" cried he again, "not Mr. Jenkinson, your benefactor; a handsome young fellow, with five hundred pounds, and good expectations?" "I beg, sir," returned she, scarcely able to speak, "that you'll desist, and not make me so very wretched." "Was ever such obstinacy known?" cried he again, "to refuse the man whom the family has such infinite obligations to, who has preserved your sister, and who has five hundred pounds? What! not have him?" "No, sir, never," replied she, angrily; "I'd sooner die first!" "If that be the case, then," cried he, "if you will not have him, I think I must have you myself." And so saying, he caught her to his breast with ardour. "My loveliest, my most sensible of girls," cried he, "how could you ever think your own Burchell could deceive you, or that Sir William Thornhill could ever cease to admire a mistress that loved him for himself alone? I have for some years sought for a woman, who, a stranger to my fortune, could think I had merit as a man. After having tried in vain, even among the pert and ugly, how great at last must be my rapture to have made a conquest over such sense and such heavenly beauty!" Then turning to Jenkinson, "As I cannot, sir, part with this young lady myself, for she has taken a fancy to the cut of my face, all the recompense I can make is, to give you her fortune, and you may call upon my steward to-morrow for five hundred pounds." Thus we had all our compliments to repeat, and Lady Thornhill underwent the

same round of ceremony that her sister had done before. In the meantime Sir William's gentleman appeared, to tell us that the equipages were ready to carry us to the inn, where everything was prepared for our reception. My wife and I led the van, and left those gloomy mansions of sorrow. The generous baronet ordered forty pounds to be distributed among the prisoners, and Mr. Wilmot, induced by his example, gave half that sum. We were received below by the shouts of the villagers, and I saw and shook by the hand two or three of my honest parishioners, who were among the number. They attended us to our inn, where a sumptuous entertainment was provided, and coarser provisions were distributed in great quantities among the populace.

After supper, as my spirits were exhausted by the alternation of pleasure and pain which they had sustained during the day, I asked permission to withdraw; and leaving the company in the midst of their mirth, as soon as I found myself alone, I poured out my heart in gratitude to the Giver of joy as well as of sorrow, and then slept undisturbed till morning.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE CONCLUSION.

THE next morning, as soon as I awaked, I found my eldest son sitting by my bed-side, who came to increase my joy with another turn of fortune in my favour. First having released me from the settlement that I had made the day before in his favour, he let me know that my merchant, who had failed in town, was arrested at Antwerp, and there had given up effects to a much greater amount than what was due to his creditors. My boy's generosity pleased me almost as much as this unlooked-for good fortune. But I had some doubts whether I ought in justice to accept his offer. While I was pondering upon this, Sir William entered the room, to whom I communicated my doubts. His opinion was, that as my son was already possessed of a very affluent fortune by his marriage, I might accept his offer without hesitation. His business,

however, was to inform me, that as he had the night before sent for the licences, and expected them every hour, he hoped that I would not refuse my assistance in making all the company happy that morning. A footman entered while we were speaking, to tell us that the messenger was returned; and as I was by this time ready, I went down, where I found the whole company as merry as affluence and innocence could make them. However, as they were now preparing for a very solemn ceremony, their laughter entirely displeased me. I told them of the grave, becoming, and sublime deportment they should assume upon this mystical occasion, and read them two homilies and a thesis of my own composing, in order to prepare them. Yet they still seemed perfectly refractory and ungovernable. Even as we were going along to church, to which I led the way, all gravity had quite forsaken them, and I was often tempted to turn back in indignation. In church a new dilemma arose, which promised no easy solution. This was, which couple should be married first; my son's bride warmly insisted that Lady Thornhill (that was to be) should take the lead; but this the other refused with equal ardour, protesting she would not be guilty of such rudeness for the world. The argument was supported for some time between both with equal obstinacy and good breeding. But as I stood all this time with my book ready, I was at last quite tired of the contest, and shutting it, "I perceive," cried I, "that none of you have a mind to be married, and I think we had as good go back again; for I suppose there will be no business done here to-day." This at once reduced them to reason. The baronet and his lady were first married, and then my son and his lovely partner.

I had previously that morning given orders that a coach should be sent for my honest neighbour Flamborough and his family, by which means, upon our return to the inn, we had the pleasure of finding the two Miss Flamboroughs alighted before us. Mr. Jenkinson gave his hand to the eldest, and my son Moses led up the other; and I have since found that he has taken a real liking to the girl, and my consent and bounty he shall have, whenever he thinks proper to demand them. We were no sooner returned to the inn, but numbers of my parishioners, hearing of my success, came to congratulate me; but among the rest were those who rose to rescue me, and whom I formerly rebuked with such sharpness. I told the story to Sir William, my son-in-law, who went out and reproved them with great severity; but, finding them

H. SIR WILLIAM AND LADY THORNHILL

quite disheartened by his harsh reproof, he gave them half a guinea a-piece to drink his health, and raise their dejected spirits.

Soon after this we were called to a very genteel entertainment, which was dressed by Mr. Thornhill's cook. And it may not be improper to observe, with respect to that gentleman, that he now resides in quality of companion at a relation's house, being very well liked, and seldom sitting at the side-table, except when there is no room at the other, for they make no stranger of him. His time is pretty much taken up in keeping his relation, who is a little melancholy, in spirits, and in learning to blow the French horn. My eldest daughter, however, still remembers him with regret; and she has even told me, though I make a great secret of it, that when he reforms she may be brought to relent. But to return, for I am not apt to digress thus, when we were to sit down to dinner, our ceremonies were going to be renewed. The question was, whether my eldest daughter, as being a matron, should not sit above the two young brides; but the debate was cut short by my son George, who proposed that the company should sit indiscriminately, every gentleman by his lady. This was received with great approbation by all, excepting my wife, who I could perceive was not perfectly satisfied, as she expected to have had the pleasure of sitting at the head of the table, and carving all the meat for all the company. But notwithstanding this, it is impossible to describe our good-humour. I can't say whether we had more wit among us now than usual, but I am certain we had more laughing, which answered the end as well. One jest I particularly remember: old Mr. Wilmot drinking to Moses, whose head was turned another way, my son replied, "Madam, I thank you." Upon which the old gentleman, winking upon the rest of the company, observed that he was thinking of his mistress. At which jest I thought the two Miss Flamboroughs would have died with laughing. As soon as dinner was over, according to my old custom, I requested that the table might be taken away, to have the pleasure of seeing all my family assembled once more by a cheerful fireside. My two little ones sat upon each knee, the rest of the company by their partners; I had nothing now on this side of the grave to wish for—all my cares were over, my pleasure was unspeakable. It now only remained that my gratitude in good fortune should exceed my former submission in adversity.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS AND COMEDIES.

POEMS.

THE DESERTED VILLAGE.

INTRODUCTION.

WHEN one gazes on a landscape of Turner or of Wilson, till his eyes are filled with all the charms of scenery, all the beauties of light and shadow, all the harmonies and contrasts of form and colour, and his heart is touched with a sense of the glories of Nature, and the skill of the limner, with what a feeling of dissatisfaction does he find his sleeve plucked by some critic, who assures him that such a piece of scenery never really existed—that the artist "has produced something which never was, and never will be, seen in any part of the world." In vain do you assure him that you have seen trees, and mountains, and stream, and verdure, and sky, and every other accessory of the picture over and over again in your wanderings through the world. Nay, that you can recall more than one scene that bears a strong resemblance to the whole landscape. You are met by the remark, "Quite true; but, nevertheless, *such* a tree never grew beside *such* a stream; *such* a sky never hung over *such* a mountain. The river belongs to England, the sky to Italy, the forest to Germany, the meadow to Ireland." "Well," you say, "but they might have all concurred in some lovely spot of earth without violating the harmonies of Nature." The critic answers you with a smile of triumph, "Oh! certainly: but, then, they *didn't*." You turn from him with a conviction that he is impertinent and a trifler, and console yourself by gazing once more on the object of his criticism. With feelings akin to these do we regard the endless disputes upon the locality of "The Deserted

Village," and the reality of its delineations. "Was Auburn in Ireland, or in England? Was it Lissoy, or Ballyoughter, or Springfield near Chelmsford? Was it anywhere? Could it be anywhere?" Let us answer: "It could well have existed. It *did* exist just where it alone needed to have existed—in the imagination of the poet, and on the page of his poem." In the details we recognise well-known features of the poet's early haunts, both of Lissoy, and Ballymahon, and Ballyoughter; not alone of scenery, but also of the manners and customs of the people. With these may have been associated remembered beauties from other scenes to complete the composition, and make it a consistent and beautiful whole. Poetry has its truth as well as history. In neither must truth be violated; but the laws by which each is to be judged are essentially different. The test of the former is its accordance with an Idea, that of the latter with a Fact. When Lord Macaulay, in one of his "Lays of Ancient Rome," describes Castor and Pollux fighting in the Roman ranks, he is not poetically false; when he exaggerates the virtues of William III., or the vices of Charles II., he is historically untrue. Goldsmith had an idea, a theory (whether politically true or not is immaterial) that the depopulation of the country was the result of the increase of luxuries. This he illustrated by a picture of a village in its two conditions of prosperity and ruin. Enough that his ideal picture is not incongruous; but it is more—it has an enduring locality, as enduring and real as if we could point out its ruins on the map; and the beings with which he has peopled it are as real to the mind as if we could read their names and epitaphs on the churchyard tombstones. The village school, with its merry urchins; the mill, with its babbling brook; the snug farmstead; the wayside inn; the church and the manse—are they not all realities?—verities poetical and natural? Do we not know the village preacher personally? Can we not say, This is no fancy portrait? Is not the pedagogue one who flourished within the memory of many a living man? Even to-day we see dances and athletic sports on the greensward, as we read of them in the poem. Is not the village, too, a reality?—pourtrayed with a charming power in its day of happiness, to make the picture more profoundly touching in its ruin.

As a poetical composition, no critic has impugned the high merits of "The Deserted Village." The whole world, learned and unlearned—all who have hearts to feel, and sensibilities to be moved—own its power. In versification, it is exquisitely harmonious; in language, it is polished, elegant, and vigorous. It teems with tender and pathetic sentiment, and touches of the finest humour; with high moral feeling; with noble and effective imagery; with portraitures of character that exhibit the conception of a genius, and the hand of a master. In fine, it abounds with all the elements that make

a great poem, and won for its author from the greatest of contemporary bards, the curt yet high eulogy, "That man is a POET."

We subjoin the Dedication, both for its elegance and as the best exposition of the Author's object:—

TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

DEAR SIR,—I can have no expectation in an address of this kind, either to add to your reputation, or to establish my own. You can gain nothing from my admiration, as I am ignorant of that art in which you are said to excel; and I may lose much by the severity of your judgment, as few have a juster taste in poetry than you. Setting interest, therefore, aside, to which I never paid much attention, I must be indulged at present in following my affections. The only dedication I ever made was to my brother, because I loved him better than most other men. He is since dead. Permit me to inscribe this poem to you.

How far you may be pleased with the versification and mere mechanical parts of this attempt, I do not pretend to inquire: but I know you will object—and indeed several of my best and wisest friends concur in the opinion—that the depopulation it deplores is nowhere to be seen, and the disorders it laments are only to be found in the poet's own imagination. To this I can scarce make any other answer than that I believe what I have written; that I have taken all possible pains, in my country excursions, for these four or five years past, to be certain of what I allege; and that all my views and inquiries have led me to believe those miseries real, which I here attempt to display. But this is not the place to enter into an inquiry whether the country be depopulating, or not; the discussion would take up too much room; and I should prove myself, at best, an indifferent politician, to tire the reader with a long preface, when I want his unfatigued attention to a long poem.

In regretting the depopulation of the country, I inveigh against the increase of our luxuries: and here also I expect the shout of modern politicians against me. For twenty or thirty years past, it has been the fashion to consider luxury as one of the greatest national advantages; and all the wisdom of antiquity, in that particular, as erroneous. Still, however, I must remain a professed ancient on that head; and continue to think those luxuries prejudicial to tastes by which so many vices are introduced, and so many kingdoms have been undone. Indeed, so much has been poured out of late on the other side of the question, that, merely for the sake of novelty and variety, one would sometimes wish to be in the right.

I am, dear Sir, your sincere friend and ardent admirer,

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

NOTE. The text of the sixth edition has been adopted in this Work.

Sweet Auburn! loveliest village of the plain.

THE DESERTED VILLAGE.

SWEET Auburn! loveliest village of the plain,
Where health and plenty cheer'd the labouring swain;
Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid,
And parting summer's lingering blooms delay'd;
Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
Seats of my youth,[1] when every sport could please;
How often have I loiter'd o'er thy green,
Where humble happiness endear'd each scene!
How often have I paused on every charm—
The shelter'd cot, the cultivated farm,
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
The decent church that topp'd the neighbouring hill;
The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,
For talking age and whispering lovers made!
How often have I bless'd the coming day,[2]
When toil remitting lent its turn to play,

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[1] *Seats of my youth.*—This epithet would indicate Lissoy or Ballyoughter, as Auburn, which was a name then unknown in Ireland. The objects and features of the landscape were certainly to be found in the former locality. There are some who contend that the description is equally appropriate to the latter.

[2] *The coming day.*—There is no reason to suppose that the poet alluded here to saints' days. The sports and recreations described were all customary on a Sunday in Ireland at and subsequent to the date of this poem.

And all the village train, from labour free,
Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree!
While many a pastime circled in the shade,
The young contending as the old survey'd;
And many a gambol frolick'd o'er the ground,
And sleights of art, and feats of strength went round;
And still, as each repeated pleasure tired,
Succeeding sports the mirthful band inspired.
The dancing pair that simply sought renown,
By holding out to tire each other down;
The swain mistrustless of his smutted face,
While secret laughter titter'd round the place;
The bashful virgin's side-long looks of love;
The matron's glance, that would those looks reprove:
These were thy charms, sweet village! sports like these,
With sweet succession, taught e'en toil to please;
These round thy bowers their cheerful influence shed,
These were thy charms—but all these charms are fled.

Sweet smiling village, loveliest of the lawn,
Thy sports are fled, and all thy charms withdrawn;
Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's hand is seen,
And Desolation saddens all thy green:
One only master grasps the whole domain,[1]
And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain;
No more thy glassy brook reflects the day,
But, choked with sedges, works its weedy way;
Along thy glades, a solitary guest,
The hollow-sounding bittern guards its nest;
Amidst thy desert walks the lapwing flies,
And tires their echoes with unvaried cries;
Sunk are thy bowers in shapeless ruin all,
And the long grass o'ertops the mouldering wall;

[1] *One only master grasps the whole domain.*—General Robert Napier, to whom these lines seem to refer, purchased the estates of Lord Dillon, including Lissoy, in 1730. Desiring to enclose a demesne of nine miles, he ejected all the tenants (with the exception of the Goldsmiths), to the number of some hundred persons, many of whom emigrated to America. The Napier estate became the subject of a protracted litigation about a century ago, which was not brought to a close till after 1838, when Lissoy was sold. A professional gentleman concerned in the sale thus concludes some interesting details with which he kindly furnished me:—"When we were preparing the advertisement, it was a question whether or not it should be stated that the place was the scene of 'The Deserted Village:' but on full consideration, it was decided that such a reference might have a very discouraging effect on the majority of intending purchasers, and the allusion was abandoned."

And, trembling, shrinking from the spoiler's hand,
Far, far away thy children leave the land.

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,[1]
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay:
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade;
A breath can make them, as a breath has made;
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied.

A time there was, ere England's griefs began,[2]
When every rood of ground maintained its man;
For him light Labour spread her wholesome store,
Just gave what life required, but gave no more;
His best companions, innocence and health;
And his best riches, ignorance of wealth.

But times are altered; trade's unfeeling train
Usurp the land, and dispossess the swain;
Along the lawn, where scattered hamlets rose,
Unwieldy wealth and cumbrous pomp repose;
And every want to luxury allied,
And every pang that folly pays to pride.
Those gentler hours that plenty bade to bloom,
Those calm desires that ask'd but little room,
Those healthful sports that graced the peaceful scene,
Lived in each look, and brighten'd all the green;
These, far departing, seek a kinder shore,
And rural mirth and manners are no more.

Sweet Auburn, parent of the blissful hour,
Thy glades forlorn confess the tyrant's power.
Here, as I take my solitary rounds,
Amidst thy tangling walks and ruined grounds,
And, many a year elapsed, return to view[3]
Where once the cottage stood, the hawthorn grew,

[1] *Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey*.—This line betrays a want of care, unusual with Goldsmith, in the use of nearly the same word twice. It is to be regretted that anything should mar the beauty of this justly celebrated passage.

[2] *A time there was, ere England's griefs began*.—It is plain that, wherever the scene of the poem was laid, the principle intended to be illustrated was applied to England as well as to Ireland.

[3] *And, many a year elapsed, return to view*.—There is no reason to suppose (as some infer from this line) that Goldsmith ever re-visited the scenes of his youth, though he certainly intended to do so, after his travels. This and the following exquisite paragraph breathe that inextinguishable love of home (amounting to pain) which pervades so many of the poet's letters and compositions.

Remembrance wakes with all her busy train,
Swells at my breast, and turns the past to pain.

In all my wanderings through this world of care,
In all my griefs—and God has given my share—
I still had hopes, my latest hours to crown,
Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down;
To husband out life's taper at the close,
And keep the flame from wasting by repose:
I still had hopes, for pride attends us still,
Amidst the swains to show my book-learn'd skill;
Around my fire an evening group to draw,
And tell of all I felt, and all I saw:
And, as a hare whom hounds and horns pursue,
Pants to the place from whence at first she flew,
I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
Here to return—and die at home at last.

Oh, blest retirement, friend to life's decline,
Retreat from cares, that never must be mine,
How blest is he who crowns, in shades like these,
A youth of labour with an age of ease;
Who quits a world where strong temptations try,
And since 'tis hard to combat, learns to fly!
For him no wretches, born to work and weep,
Explore the mine, or tempt the dangerous deep;
Nor surly porter stands in guilty state,
To spurn imploring famine from the gate;
But on he moves to meet his latter end,
Angels around befriending virtue's friend;
Sinks to the grave with unperceived decay,
While resignation[1] gently slopes the way;
And, all his prospects brightening to the last,
His heaven commences ere the world be past.

Sweet was the sound, when oft, at evening's close,
Up yonder hill[2] the village murmur rose;

[1] *Resignation.*—This description suggested to Reynolds his picture of "Resignation," which he dedicated to Goldsmith.

[2] *Up yonder hill.*—In front of the old parsonage house at Lissoy is a hill called Knockaruadh (the Red Hill), and now "Goldsmith's Mount," which superstition peopled with fairies. The poet, as a boy, loved to loiter there, and, as he says, "take in to me the most pleasing horizon in Nature." From it the scenery and objects described in the poem were all visible.

The sad historian of the pensive plain.

There, as I pass'd, with careless steps and slow,
The mingling notes came soften'd from below ;
The swain responsive as the milk-maid sung,
The sober herd that low'd to meet their young,
The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool,
The playful children just let loose from school,
The watch-dog's voice that bay'd the whispering wind,
And the loud laugh that spoke the vacant mind ;
These all in sweet confusion sought the shade,
And fill'd each pause the nightingale had made.
But now the sounds of population fail,
No cheerful murmurs fluctuate in the gale,
No busy steps the grass-grown foot-way tread,
For all the bloomy flush of life is fled :
All but yon widow'd, solitary thing,[1]

[1] *All but yon widow'd, solitary thing* —Dr Strean, who was curate of Lissoy in 1807, remembered a poor widow there, named Catherine Geraghty, whom he believed to be the person here alluded to.

That feebly bends beside the plashy spring;
She, wretched matron, forced, in age, for bread,
To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread,
To pick her wintry faggot from the thorn,
To seek her nightly shade, and weep till morn;
She only left of all the harmless train,
The sad historian of the pensive plain.

Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,
And still where many a garden-flower grows wild;
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
The village preacher's modest mansion rose.[1]
A man he was, to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a year,
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had changed, nor wish'd to change, his place;
Unskilful he to fawn, or seek for power
By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour;
Far other aims his heart had learn'd to prize,
More bent to raise the wretched than to rise.
His house was known to all the vagrant train,
He chid their wanderings, but relieved their pain;
The long-remember'd beggar was his guest,
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast;
The ruin'd spendthrift, now no longer proud,
Claim'd kindred there, and had his claims allow'd;
The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
Sat by his fire, and talk'd the night away;
Wept o'er his wounds or tales of sorrow done,
Shoulder'd his crutch, and show'd how fields were won.
Pleased with his guests, the good man learn'd to glow,
And quite forgot their vices in their woe;
Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
His pity gave ere charity began.

Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
And e'en his failings lean'd to virtue's side;

[1] *The village preacher's modest mansion rose.*—The original of the charming portrait of a country parson that follows is doubtless the poet's father, Charles. The virtues of his brother Henry were probably also present to his mind, to complete the delineation.

But in his duty prompt at every call,
He watch'd and wept, he pray'd and felt for all.
And, as a bird each fond endearment tries,
To tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies;
He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.

Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt, and pain, by turns dismay'd,
The reverend champion stood. At his control,
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul;
Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,
And his last faltering accents whisper'd praise.

At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorn'd the venerable place;
Truth from his lips prevail'd with double sway,
And fools, who came to scoff, remain'd to pray.[1]
The service past, around the pious man,
With steady zeal each honest rustic ran;
E'en children follow'd, with endearing wile,
And pluck'd his gown to share the good man's smile
His ready smile a parent's warmth express'd;
Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distress'd:
To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven.
As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.[2]

Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way,
With blossom'd furze unprofitably gay,

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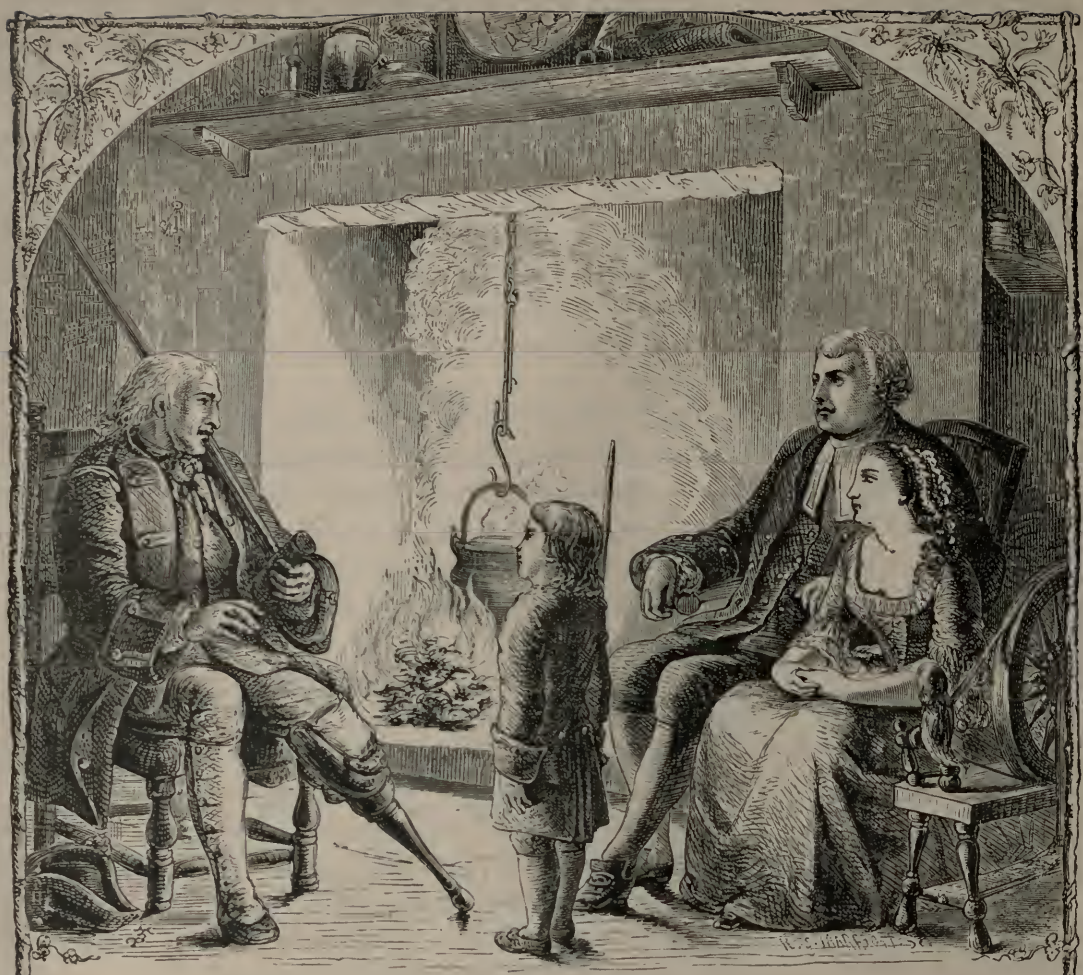
[1] *And fools, who came to scoff, remain'd to pray*.—Prior cites a line in the opening of Dryden's 'Britannia Rediviva'—"And sent us back to praise who came to pray"—as presenting a resemblance in expression, though not in thought, to the line in the text.

[2] *Eternal sunshine settles on its head*.—The range of English poetry presents nothing grander than the simile which closes this noble picture. It was probably suggested, as the Rev. Gilbert Wakefield remarks, by the fine lines of Claudian:—

"——— Ut *altus* Olympi
Vertex qui spatio *ventos* hyemque *relinquit*,
Perpetuum nullâ temeratus nube serenum,
Celsior exsurgit pluviis, anditque recentes
Sub pedibus nimbos, et rauca tonitrua calcat,' &c.



Shoulder'd his crutch, and show'd how fields were won.

There, in his noisy mansion skill'd to rule,
The village master[1] taught his little school;
A man severe he was, and stern to view,
I knew him well, and every truant knew.
Well had the boding tremblers learn'd to trace
The day's disasters in his morning face;
Full well they laugh'd with counterfeited glee
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he:
Full well the busy whisper, circling round,
Convey'd the dismal tidings when he frown'd:
Yet he was kind, or if severe in aught,
The love he bore to learning was in fault:

[1] *The village master*.—This admirable and humorous sketch of a village pedagogue has all the marks of being taken from the life. In it we have, no doubt, the portrait of the clever and eccentric Lissoy schoolmaster, Quarter-master Thomas Byrne, Oliver's first male instructor.

As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.

The village all declared how much he knew;
'Twas certain he could write and cypher too;
Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,
And even the story ran that he could gauge;
In arguing, too, the parson own'd his skill,
For e'en though vanquish'd, he could argue still;
While words of learned length and thundering sound,
Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around;
And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew,
That one small head should carry all he knew.

But past is all his fame. The very spot
Where many a time he triumph'd, is forgot.
Near yonder thorn that lifts its head on high,
Where once the sign-post caught the passing eye,
Low lies that house where nut-brown draughts inspired,
Where grey-beard mirth, and smiling toil retired;
Where village statesmen talk'd with looks profound,
And news much older than their ale went round.
Imagination fondly stoops to trace
The parlour splendours of that festive place;
The white-wash'd wall, the nicely sanded floor,
The varnish'd clock that click'd behind the door;
The chest, contrived a double debt to pay,
A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day;
The pictures placed for ornament and use;
The twelve good rules, the royal game of goose;
The hearth, except when winter chill'd the day,
With aspen boughs, and flowers, and fennel gay;
While broken tea-cups, wisely kept for show,
Ranged o'er the chimney, glisten'd in a row.[1]

Vain transitory splendours! could not all
Reprieve the tottering mansion from its fall?
Obscure it sinks, nor shall it more impart
An hour's importance to the poor man's heart;

[1] *Ranged o'er the chimney, glistened in a row.*—This description has, upon the whole, more the character of an English than an Irish village inn Good Mr Hogan, however, piously restored "The Three Jolly Pigeons" at Lissoy, and furnished it to suit the descriptive catalogue as above.

Thither no more the peasant shall repair,
To sweet oblivion of his daily care;
No more the farmer's news, the barber's tale,
No more the woodman's ballad shall prevail;
No more the smith his dusky brow shall clear,
Relax his ponderous strength, and lean to hear;
The host himself no longer shall be found
Careful to see the mantling bliss go round;
Nor the coy maid, half willing to be press'd,
Shall kiss the cup to pass it to the rest.

Yes! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
These simple blessings of the lowly train;
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the gloss of art:
Spontaneous joys, where Nature has its play,
The soul adopts, and owns their first-born sway;
Lightly they frolic o'er the vacant mind,
Unenvied, unmolested, unconfined.
But the long pomp, the midnight masquerade,
With all the freaks of wanton wealth array'd,
In these, ere triflers half their wish obtain,
The toiling pleasure sickens into pain:
And, e'en while fashion's brightest arts decoy,
The heart distrusting asks if this be joy.

Ye friends to truth, ye statesmen who survey
The rich man's joys increase, the poor's decay,
'Tis yours to judge how wide the limits stand
Between a splendid and a happy land.
Proud swells the tide with loads of freighted ore,
And shouting Folly hails them from her shore;
Hoards, e'en beyond the miser's wish, abound,
And rich men flock from all the world around.
Yet count our gains. This wealth is but a name
That leaves our useful products still the same.
Not so the loss. The man of wealth and pride,
Takes up a space that many poor supplied;

Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds,
Space for his horses, equipage, and hounds:
The robe that wraps his limbs in silken sloth
Has robb'd the neighbouring fields of half their growth;
His seat, where solitary sports are seen,
Indignant spurns the cottage from the green;
Around the world each needful product flies,
For all the luxuries the world supplies:
While thus the land, adorn'd for pleasure all,
In barren splendour feebly waits the fall.

As some fair female, unadorn'd and plain,
Secure to please while youth confirms her reign,
Slights every borrow'd charm that dress supplies,
Nor shares with art the triumph of her eyes;
But when those charms are past, for charms are frail,
When time advances, and when lovers fail,
She then shines forth solicitous to bless,
In all the glaring impotence of dress.
Thus fares the land by luxury betray'd:
In Nature's simplest charms at first array'd,
But verging to decline, its splendours rise,
Its vistas strike, its palaces surprise;
While, scourged by famine from the smiling land,
The mournful peasant leads his humble band;
And while he sinks without one arm to save,
The country blooms—a garden and a grave.

Where then, ah! where shall poverty reside,
To 'scape the pressure of contiguous pride?
If to some common's fenceless limits stray'd,
He drives his flock to pick the scanty blade,
Those fenceless fields the sons of wealth divide,
And e'en the bare-worn common is denied.

If to the city sped—What waits him there?
To see profusion that he must not share;
To see ten thousand baneful arts combined
To pamper luxury and thin mankind;

The breezy covert of the warbling grove,
That only shelter'd thefts of harmless love.

To see those joys the sons of pleasure know
Extorted from his fellow-creature's woe.
Here, while the courtier glitters in brocade,
There the pale artist plies the sickly trade;
Here, while the proud their long-drawn pomps display,
There the black gibbet glooms beside the way.
The dome where Pleasure holds her midnight reign,
Here, richly deck'd, admits the gorgeous train:
Tumultuous grandeur crowds the blazing square,
The rattling chariots clash, the torches glare.
Sure scenes like these no troubles e'er annoy!
Sure these denote one universal joy!
Are these thy serious thoughts? Ah! turn thine eyes
Where the poor houseless, shivering female lies.
She once, perhaps, in village plenty blest,
Has wept at tales of innocence distrest;
Her modest looks the cottage might adorn,
Sweet as the primrose peeps beneath the thorn;

Now lost to all, her friends, her virtue fled,
Near her betrayer's door she lays her head;
And pinch'd with cold, and shrinking from the shower,
With heavy heart deplores that luckless hour,
When idly first, ambitious of the town,
She left her wheel and robes of country brown.

Do thine, sweet Auburn, thine, the loveliest train,
Do thy fair tribes participate her pain?
E'en now, perhaps, by cold and hunger led,
At proud men's doors they ask a little bread!
Ah! no. To distant climes, a dreary scene,
Where half the convex world intrudes between,
Through torrid tracts with fainting steps they go,
Where wild Altama murmurs to their woe.[1]
Far different there from all that charm'd before,
The various terrors of that horrid shore;
Those blazing suns that dart a downward ray,
And fiercely shed intolerable day;
Those matted woods where birds forget to sing,
But silent bats in drowsy clusters cling;
Those poisonous fields, with rank luxuriance crown'd,
Where the dark scorpion gathers death around;
Where at each step the stranger fears to wake
The rattling terrors of the vengeful snake;
Where crouching tigers wait their hapless prey,
And savage men more murderous still than they;
While oft in whirls the mad tornado flies,
Mingling the ravaged landscape with the skies.
Far different these from every former scene,
The cooling brook, the grassy-vested green,
The breezy covert of the warbling grove,
That only shelter'd thefts of harmless love.

Good Heaven! what sorrows gloomed that parting day,
That call'd them from their native walks away;

[1] *Where wild Altama murmurs to their woe.*—"I remember no English poet," said Lord Carlisle, referring to these lines on a recent occasion, "except, indeed, it be Milton, who made more harmonious use of proper names in his verses. I remember consoling myself with that couplet for a whole day while I was becalmed off the mouth of the Altama."

When the poor exiles, every pleasure past,
Hung round the bowers, and fondly look'd their last,
And took a long farewell, and wish'd in vain
For seats like these beyond the western main;
And shuddering still to face the distant deep,
Return'd and wept, and still return'd to weep!
The good old sire the first prepared to go
To new-found worlds, and wept for others' woe;
But for himself, in conscious virtue brave,
He only wish'd for worlds beyond the grave.
His lovely daughter, lovelier in her tears,
The fond companion of his helpless years,
Silent went next, neglectful of her charms,
And left a lover's for a father's arms.
With louder plaints the mother spoke her woes,
And blest the cot where every pleasure rose;
And kiss'd her thoughtless babes with many a tear,
And clasp'd them close, in sorrow doubly dear;
Whilst her fond husband strove to lend relief
In all the silent manliness of grief.

O Luxury! thou cursed by Heaven's decree,
How ill exchanged are things like these for thee!
How do thy potions, with insidious joy,
Diffuse their pleasures only to destroy!
Kingdoms by thee, to sickly greatness grown,
Boast of a florid vigour not their own:
At every draught large and more large they grow,
A bloated mass of rank, unwieldy woe;
Till sapp'd their strength, and every part unsound,
Down, down they sink, and spread a ruin round.

E'en now the devastation is begun,
And half the business of destruction done;
E'en now methinks, as pondering here I stand,
I see the rural Virtues leave the land.
Down where yon anchoring vessel spreads the sail
That, idly waiting, flaps with every gale,
Downward they move, a melancholy band,
Pass from the shore, and darken all the strand.

Downward they move, a melancholy band

Contented toil, and hospitable care,
And kind connubial tenderness, are there;
And piety with wishes placed above,
And steady loyalty, and faithful love.
And thou, sweet Poetry! thou loveliest maid,
Still first to fly where sensual joys invade;
Unfit in these degenerate times of shame
To catch the heart or strike for honest fame,
Dear charming nymph, neglected and decried,
My shame in crowds, my solitary pride;
Thou source of all my bliss, and all my woe,
That found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so;
Thou guide by which the nobler arts excel,
Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well![1]
Farewell; and, oh! where'er thy voice be tried,
On Torno's cliffs, or Pambamarca's side,
Whether where equinoctial fervours glow,
Or winter wraps the polar world in snow,
Still, let thy voice prevailing over time,
Redress the rigours of th' inclement clime;
Aid slighted truth with thy persuasive strain;
Teach erring man to spurn the rage of gain;
Teach him that states, of native strength possess'd,
Though very poor, may still be very blest;
That trade's proud empire hastes to swift decay,[2]
As ocean sweeps the labour'd mole away;
While self-dependent power can time defy,
As rocks resist the billows and the sky.

[1] *Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well!*—Lord Carlisle, in quoting this passage, observes, "It seems to me to be strung to the highest chord in the whole compass of his lyre."

[2] *That trade's proud empire hastes to swift decay.*—Boswell states that Dr. Johnson marked for him with a pencil the last four lines of this poem as having been written by him. Boswell's "Life of Johnson," by Croker, vol. ii., p 309: Edit. 1835.

THE TRAVELLER;

OR, A PROSPECT OF SOCIETY.

INTRODUCTION.

"THE TRAVELLER" is memorable as the first of Goldsmith's publications which appeared with his own name. It was the experiences and the reflections of his Continental travel. Upon it he spent, during eight years of ungrateful labour, many an hour of deep yet pleasant meditation. To it he looked, in hope and in fear, as that which was to give him name and fame. And he was not disappointed. The charms of its composition, elegant yet simple; the power of its descriptions, true to Nature, lively, pathetic, and picturesque; the moral, philosophic, and social opinions propounded; the vigour and loftiness of expression which it occasionally displays—all these commended "THE TRAVELLER" to the judgment of every critic as a work of the highest merit. Great names endorsed the popular praise. Johnson pronounced it a poem "to which it would not be easy to find anything equal since the days of Pope;" and Charles Fox said it was one of the finest poems in the English language. Time has confirmed the criticism of contemporaries. Every year "THE TRAVELLER" has grown in favour. It is now read everywhere and by every one.

Two great moralities are inculcated in this poem. One, a deep moral feeling—Home-love, the very soul of all patriotism, as it was an abiding passion in Goldsmith's heart; the other, a high moral principle of universal truth and application—that man finds his greatest happiness not in any particular region, or under any particular form of government, but in his own mind; a thought finely expressed by Milton—

> "The mind is its own place, and in itself
> Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven;"

and that the worst of ills humanity everywhere endures are to be cured, not by human laws, but by a Divine philosophy that humanity cannot teach.

DEDICATION.

TO THE REV. HENRY GOLDSMITH.

DEAR SIR,—I am sensible that the friendship between us can acquire no new force from the ceremonies of a Dedication; and perhaps it demands an excuse thus to prefix your name to my attempts, which you decline giving with your own. But as a part of this poem was formerly written to you from Switzerland, the whole can now, with propriety, be only inscribed

to you. It will also throw a light upon many parts of it when the reader understands that it is addressed to a man who, despising fame and fortune, has retired early to happiness and obscurity with an income of forty pounds a year.

I now perceive, my dear brother, the wisdom of your humble choice. You have entered upon a sacred office, where the harvest is great, and the labourers are but few; while you have left the field of ambition, where the labourers are many, and the harvest not worth carrying away. But, of all kinds of ambition, what from the refinement of the times, from different systems of criticism, and from the divisions of party, that which pursues poetical fame is the wildest.

Poetry makes a principal amusement among unpolished nations; but in a country verging to the extremes of refinement, Painting and Music come in for a share. As these offer the feeble mind a less laborious entertainment, they at first rival Poetry, and at length supplant her; they engross all that favour once shown to her, and, though but younger sisters, seize upon the elder's birthright.[1]

Yet, however this art may be neglected by the powerful, it is still in greater danger from the mistaken efforts of the learned to improve it. What criticisms have not been heard of late in favour of blank verse and Pindaric odes, choruses, anapests, and iambics, alliterative care and happy negligence! Every absurdity has now a champion to defend it; and as he is generally in the wrong, so he has always much to say; for error is ever talkative.

But there is an enemy to this art still more dangerous—I mean, Party. Party entirely distorts the judgment, and destroys the taste. When the mind is once infected with this disease, it can only find pleasure in what contributes to increase the distemper. Like the tiger, that seldom desists from pursuing man after having once preyed upon human flesh, the reader who has once gratified his appetite with calumny makes ever after the most agreeable feast upon murdered reputation. Such readers generally admire some half-witted thing, who wants to be thought a bold man, having lost the character of a wise one. Him they dignify with the name of a poet; his tawdry lampoons are called satires; his turbulence is said to be force, and his frenzy fire.

What reception a poem may find which has neither abuse, party, nor blank verse to support it, I cannot tell, nor am I solicitous to know. My aims are right. Without espousing the cause of any party, I have attempted to moderate the rage of all. I have endeavoured to show that there may be equal happiness in states that are differently governed from our own; that every state has a particular principle of happiness, and that this principle in each may be carried to a mischievous excess. There are few can judge better than yourself how far these positions are illustrated in this poem.

I am, dear Sir, your most affectionate brother,

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

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[1] *Elder's birthright.*—The complaint which Goldsmith (following Dryden) here makes against the sister arts of Music and Painting can scarcely be sustained. They follow the muse of Song to compete with, not to rival—to sustain, not to supplant. The painter and sculptor draw much of their inspiration from the poet, and repay him by presenting his thoughts through the medium of another sense. In our days, assuredly, the elder sisters do not engross, though they largely share, the public favour.

REMOTE, unfriended, melancholy, slow,[1]
Or by the lazy Scheld, or wandering Po;
Or onward, where the rude Carinthian boor
Against the houseless stranger shuts the door;
Or where Campania's plain forsaken lies,
A weary waste expanding to the skies;
Where'er I roam, whatever realms to see,
My heart, untravell'd, fondly turns to thee:
Still to my brother turns, with ceaseless pain,
And drags at each remove a lengthening chain.

Eternal blessings crown my earliest friend,
And round his dwelling guardian saints attend!
Blest be that spot, where cheerful guests retire
To pause from toil, and trim their evening fire;
Blest that abode, where want and pain repair,
And every stranger finds a ready chair;
Blest be those feasts with simple plenty crown'd,
Where all the ruddy family around

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[1] *Slow.*—Notwithstanding Johnson's contradiction of Goldsmith as to what he meant by this word, I am disposed to think the poet really knew what he intended to express by the term "slow" better than the lexicographer. The context is certainly in favour of "tardiness of locomotion," and to modern ears Johnson's interpretation would savour of *slang*. Probably the Doctor differed from his friend for the pleasure of doing so.

E'en now, where Alpine solitudes ascend,
I sit me down, a pensive hour to spend.

Laugh at the jests or pranks that never fail,
Or sigh with pity at some mournful tale;
Or press the bashful stranger to his food,
And learn the luxury of doing good.

But me, not destined such delights to share,
My prime of life in wandering spent and care;
Impell'd with steps unceasing to pursue
Some fleeting good, that mocks me with the view;
That, like the circle bounding earth and skies,
Allures from far, yet, as I follow, flies;
My fortune leads to traverse realms alone,
And find no spot of all the world my own.

E'en now, where Alpine solitudes ascend,
I sit me down a pensive hour to spend;
And, placed on high above the storm's career,
Look downward where a hundred realms appear;
Lakes, forests, cities, plains extending wide,
The pomp of kings, the shepherd's humbler pride.

When thus Creation's charms around combine,
Amidst the store should thankless pride repine?
Say, should the philosophic mind disdain
That good which makes each humbler bosom vain?
Let school-taught pride dissemble all it can,
These little things are great to little man;
And wiser he whose sympathetic mind
Exults in all the good of all mankind.
Ye glittering towns, with wealth and splendour crown'd;
Ye fields, where summer spreads profusion round;
Ye lakes, whose vessels catch the busy gale;
Ye bending swains that dress the flowery vale;
For me your tributary stores combine:
Creation's heir, the world, the world is mine!

As some lone miser visiting his store,
Bends at his treasure, counts, recounts it o'er;
Hoards after hoards his rising raptures fill,
Yet still he sighs, for hoards are wanting still:

Thus to my breast alternate passions rise,
Pleased with each good that Heaven to man supplies:
Yet oft a sigh prevails, and sorrows fall,
To see the hoard of human bliss so small;
And oft I wish amidst the scene to find
Some spot to real happiness consign'd,
Where my worn soul, each wandering hope at rest,
May gather bliss to see my fellows blest

But where to find that happiest spot below,
Who can direct, when all pretend to know?
The shuddering tenant of the frigid zone
Boldly proclaims that happiest spot his own;
Extols the treasures of his stormy seas,
And his long nights of revelry and ease:
The naked negro, panting at the line,
Boasts of his golden sands and palmy wine,
Basks in the glare or stems the tepid wave,
And thanks his gods for all the good they gave.
Such is the patriot's boast, where'er we roam,
His first, best country, ever is at home.
And yet, perhaps, if countries we compare,
And estimate the blessings which they share,
Though patriots flatter, still shall wisdom find
An equal portion dealt to all mankind;
As different good, by Art or Nature given,
To different nations makes their blessings even.

Nature, a mother kind alike to all,
Still grants her bliss at labour's earnest call;
With food as well the peasant is supplied
On Idra's cliffs as Arno's shelvy side;
And though the rocky-crested summits frown,
These rocks, by custom, turn to beds of down.
From Art more various are the blessings sent—
Wealth, commerce, honour, liberty, content;
Yet these each other's power so strong contest,
That either seems destructive of the rest.

As some lone miser visiting his store,
Bends at his treasure, counts, recounts it o'er.

Where wealth and freedom reign, contentment fails;
And honour sinks where commerce long prevails.
Hence every state, to one loved blessing prone,
Conforms and models life to that alone;
Each to the favourite happiness attends,
And spurns the plan that aims at other ends;
Till, carried to excess in each domain,
This favourite good begets peculiar pain.

But let us try these truths with closer eyes,
And trace them through the prospect as it lies:
Here for a while, my proper cares resign'd,
Here let me sit in sorrow for mankind;
Like yon neglected shrub, at random cast,
That shades the steep, and sighs at every blast.

Far to the right, where Apennine ascends,
Bright as the summer, Italy extends;

As in those domes where Cæsars once bore sway,
Defaced by time, and tottering in decay,
There in the ruin, heedless of the dead,
The shelter-seeking peasant builds his shed.

Its uplands sloping deck the mountain's side,
Woods over woods, in gay theatric pride;
While oft some temple's mouldering tops between,
With venerable grandeur mark the scene.

Could Nature's bounty satisfy the breast,
The sons of Italy were surely blest.
Whatever fruits in different climes were found,
That proudly rise, or humbly court the ground;
Whatever blooms in torrid tracts appear,
Whose bright succession decks the varied year;
Whatever sweets salute the northern sky
With vernal lives, that blossom but to die;
These, here disporting, own the kindred soil,
Nor ask luxuriance from the planter's toil;
While sea-born gales their gelid wings expand,
To winnow fragrance round the smiling land.

But small the bliss that sense alone bestows,
And sensual bliss is all the nation knows.
In florid beauty groves and fields appear,
Man seems the only growth that dwindles here.
Contrasted faults through all his manners reign;
Though poor, luxurious; though submissive, vain;
Though grave, yet trifling; zealous, yet untrue;
And e'en in penance planning sins anew.
All evils here contaminate the mind,
That opulence departed leaves behind;
For wealth was theirs, not far removed the date
When commerce proudly flourish'd through the state:
At her command the palace learnt to rise,
Again the long-fall'n column sought the skies;
The canvas glow'd, beyond e'en Nature warm,
The pregnant quarry teem'd with human form:
Till, more unsteady than the southern gale,
Commerce on other shores display'd her sail;
While nought remain'd of all that riches gave,
But towns unmann'd, and lords without a slave:

And late the nation found with fruitless skill,
Its former strength was but plethoric ill.

Yet, still the loss of wealth is here supplied
By arts, the splendid wrecks of former pride:
From these the feeble heart and long-fall'n mind,
An easy compensation seem to find.
Here may be seen, in bloodless pomp array'd,
The pasteboard triumph and the cavalcade;
Processions form'd for piety and love,
A mistress or a saint in every grove.
By sports like these are all their cares beguiled;
The sports of children satisfy the child;[1]
Each nobler aim, repress'd by long control,
Now sinks at last, or feebly mans the soul;
While low delights succeeding fast behind,
In happier meanness occupy the mind.
As in those domes where Cæsars once bore sway,
Defaced by time, and tottering in decay,
There in the ruin, heedless of the dead,
The shelter-seeking peasant builds his shed;
And, wondering man could want the larger pile,
Exults, and owns his cottage with a smile.
My soul, turn from them; turn we to survey
Where rougher climes a nobler race display;
Where the bleak Swiss their stormy mansion tread,
And force a churlish soil for scanty bread:
No product here the barren hills afford,
But man and steel, the soldier and his sword;
No vernal blooms their torpid rocks array,
But winter, lingering, chills the lap of May;
No zephyr fondly sues the mountain's breast,
But meteors glare, and stormy glooms invest.

Yet still, e'en here, content can spread a charm,
Redress the clime, and all its rage disarm.

[1] *The sports of children satisfy the child.*—Prior relates an anecdote, very characteristic of Goldsmith, which gives us the origin of this couplet on his own confession. A friend surprised the poet at his desk, occupied between the intervals of composition in teaching a favourite dog to sit on his haunches "begging." The lines above were just recently written.

Though poor the peasant's hut, his feast tho' small;
He sees his little lot the lot of all;
Sees no contiguous palace rear its head,
To shame the meanness of his humble shed;
No costly lord the sumptuous banquet deal,
To make him loathe his vegetable meal;
But calm, and bred in ignorance and toil,
Each wish contracting, fits him to the soil;
Cheerful at morn, he wakes from short repose,
Breasts the keen air, and carols as he goes;[1]
With patient angle trolls the finny deep,
Or drives his venturous ploughshare to the steep;
Or seeks the den where snow-tracks mark the way,
And drags the struggling savage into day.
At night returning, every labour sped
He sits him down, the monarch of a shed;
Smiles by his cheerful fire, and round surveys
His children's looks that brighten at the blaze;
While his loved partner, boastful of her hoard
Displays her cleanly platter on the board;
And haply, too, some pilgrim thither led,
With many a tale repays the nightly bed.

Thus every good his native wilds impart,
Imprints the patriot passion on his heart;
And e'en those hills that round his mansion rise,
Enhance the bliss his scanty fund supplies.
Dear is that shed to which his soul conforms,
And dear that hill which lifts him to the storms;
And as a child, when scaring sounds molest,
Clings close and closer to the mother's breast,
So the loud torrent, and the whirlwind's roar,
But bind him to his native mountains more.

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[1] *Breasts the keen air, &c.*—A similar use of this word is to be found in Shakespeare:—

"Breasted
The surge most swoln that met him."—*Tempest*, Act ii., Scene 1.
"Breasting the lofty surge."—*Henry V.*, Act iii.

In some editions "breathes" has been substituted—a corruption that greatly injures the strength and beauty of the line.

May sit, like falcons, cowering on the nest.

Such are the charms to barren states assign'd;
Their wants but few, their wishes all confined.
Yet let them only share the praises due;
If few their wants, their pleasures are but few:
For every want that stimulates the breast,
Becomes a source of pleasure when redress'd;
Whence from such lands each pleasing science flies,
That first excites desire, and then supplies;
Unknown to them when sensual pleasures cloy,
To fill the languid pause with finer joy;
Unknown those powers that raise the soul to flame,
Catch every nerve, and vibrate through the frame.
Their level life is but a smouldering fire,
Unquench'd by want, unfann'd by strong desire;
Unfit for raptures, or if raptures cheer
On some high festival of once a year,
In wild excess the vulgar breast takes fire,
Till, buried in debauch, the bliss expire.

But not their joys alone thus coarsely flow;
Their morals, like their pleasures, are but low:
For, as refinement stops, from sire to son
Unalter'd, unimprov'd, the manners run;
And Love's and Friendship's finely-pointed dart
Fall blunted from each indurated heart.
Some sterner virtues o'er the mountain's breast
May sit, like falcons, cowering on the nest;
But all the gentler morals, such as play
Through life's more cultured walks, and charm the way,
These, far dispersed on timorous pinions fly,
To sport and flutter in a kinder sky.

To kinder skies, where gentler manners reign,
I turn; and France displays her bright domain.
Gay, sprightly land of mirth and social ease,
Pleased with thyself, whom all the world can please!
How often have I led thy sportive choir,
With tuneless pipe beside the murmuring Loire![1]
Where shading elms along the margin grew,
And freshen'd from the wave the zephyr flew;
And haply, though my harsh touch faltering still,
But mock'd all tune, and marr'd the dancer's skill,
Yet would the village praise my wondrous power,
And dance, forgetful of the noon-tide hour.
Alike all ages: dames of ancient days
Have led their children through the mirthful maze;
And the gay grandsire, skill'd in gestic lore,
Has frisk'd beneath the burden of threescore.

So blest a life these thoughtless realms display,
Thus idly busy rolls their world away,
Theirs are those arts that mind to mind endear,
For honour forms the social temper here.

[1] *With tuneless pipe beside the murmuring Loire.*—Goldsmith describes, under the character of the Philosophic Vagabond in the "Vicar of Wakefield," his wanderings in Flanders and France, winning a night's lodging and food, by his performance on the flute, from the simple peasants, who "were poor enough to be very merry;" while "people of fashion," he says, "always thought my performance odious, and never rewarded me even with a trifle."

Honour, that praise which real merit gains,
Or e'en imaginary worth obtains,
Here passes current; paid from hand to hand,
It shifts, in splendid traffic, round the land.
From courts to camps, to cottages it strays,
And all are taught an avarice of praise;
They please, are pleased; they give to get esteem,
Till, seeming blest, they grow to what they seem.

But while this softer art their bliss supplies,
It gives their follies, also, room to rise;
For praise too dearly loved, or warmly sought,
Enfeebles all internal strength of thought;
And the weak soul, within itself unblest,
Leans for all pleasure on another's breast.
Hence ostentation here, with tawdry art,
Pants for the vulgar praise which fools impart;
Here vanity assumes her pert grimace,
And trims her robes of frieze with copper lace;
Here beggar pride defrauds her daily cheer,
To boast one splendid banquet once a year:
The mind still turns where shifting fashion draws,
Nor weighs the solid worth of self-applause.

To men of other minds my fancy flies,
Embosom'd in the deep where Holland lies:
Methinks her patient sons before me stand,
Where the broad ocean leans against the land,
And, sedulous to stop the coming tide,
Lifts the tall rampire's artificial pride.
Onward, methinks, and diligently slow,
The firm connected bulwark seems to grow,
Spreads its long arms amidst the watery roar,
Scoops out an empire, and usurps the shore:
While the pent ocean rising o'er the pile,
Sees an amphibious world beneath him smile;
The slow canal, the yellow-blossom'd vale,
The willow-tufted bank, the gliding sail,

The crowded mart, the cultivated plain,
A new creation rescued from his reign.[1]

Thus, while around the wave-subjected soil
Impels the native to repeated toil,
Industrious habits in each bosom reign,
And industry begéts a love of gain.
Hence all the good from opulence that springs,
With all those ills superfluous treasure brings,
Are here display'd. Their much-loved wealth imparts
Convenience, plenty, elegance, and arts;
But view them closer, craft and fraud appear,
E'en liberty itself is barter'd here;
At gold's superior charms, all freedom flies,
The needy sell it, and the rich man buys;
A land of tyrants, and a den of slaves,
Here wretches seek dishonourable graves,
And calmly bent, to servitude conform,
Dull as their lakes that slumber in the storm.

Heavens! how unlike their Belgic sires of old!
Rough, poor, content, ungovernably bold;
War in each breast, and freedom on each brow:
How much unlike the sons of Britain now!

Fired at the sound, my genius spreads her wing,
And flies where Britain courts the western spring;
Where lawns extend that scorn Arcadian pride,
And brighter streams than famed Hydaspes glide.
There all around the gentlest breezes stray,
There gentle music melts on every spray;
Creation's mildest charms are there combined,
Extremes are only in the master's mind.
Stern o'er each bosom reason holds her state,[2]
With daring aims irregularly great.

[1] *A new creation rescued from his reign.*—There are few passages to be found in the range of English poetry more condensed, harmonious, and vigorous, than this felicitous description of Holland.

[2] *Stern o'er each bosom, &c.*—Boswell tells us that when Dr. Johnson was in Oban, he repeated the passage beginning with this line to the end of the paragraph with such energy, that the tear started into his eye.—*Croker's "Boswell,"* 1839, vol. v., p. 85.

Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,
I see the lords of human kind pass by;
Intent on high designs, a thoughtful band,
By forms unfashion'd, fresh from Nature's hand,
Fierce in their native hardiness of soul,
True to imagined right, above control,
While e'en the peasant boasts these rights to scan,
And learns to venerate himself as man.

Thine, Freedom, thine the blessings pictured here,
Thine are those charms that dazzle and endear;
Too blest, indeed, were such without alloy,
But foster'ed e'en by Freedom, ills annoy:
That independence Britons prize too high,
Keeps man from man, and breaks the social tie.
The self-dependent lordlings stand alone,
All claims that bind and sweeten life unknown;
Here by the bonds of nature feebly held,
Minds combat minds, repelling and repell'd;
Ferments arise, imprison'd factions roar,
Repress'd ambition struggles round her shore,
Till, over-wrought, the general system feels
Its motions stop, or frenzy fires the wheels.

Nor this the worst. As nature's ties decay,
As duty, love, and honour fail to sway,
Fictitious bonds, the bonds of wealth and law,
Still gather strength, and force unwilling awe.
Hence all obedience bows to these alone,
And talent sinks, and merit weeps unknown:
Till time may come, when stript of all her charms,
The land of scholars and the nurse of arms,
Where noble stems transmit the patriot flame,
Where kings have toil'd, and poets wrote for fame,
One sink of level avarice shall lie,
And scholars, soldiers, kings, unhonour'd die.

Yet think not, thus when Freedom's ills I state,
I mean to flatter kings, or court the great.

Ye powers of truth, that bid my soul aspire,
Far from my bosom drive the low desire;
And thou, fair Freedom, taught alike to feel
The rabble's rage, and tyrant's angry steel;
Thou transitory flower, alike undone
By proud contempt, or favour's fostering sun,
Still may thy blooms the changeful clime endure,
I only would repress them to secure:
For just experience tells, in every soil,
That those who think must govern those who toil;
And all that freedom's highest aims can reach,
Is but to lay proportion'd loads on each.
Hence, should one order disproportion'd grow,
Its double weight must ruin all below.

Oh, then, how blind to all that truth requires,
Who think it freedom when a part aspires!
Calm is my soul, nor apt to rise in arms,
Except when fast-approaching danger warms:
But when contending chiefs blockade the throne,
Contracting regal power to stretch their own;
When I behold a factious band agree
To call it freedom when themselves are free;
Each wanton judge new penal statutes draw,
Laws grind the poor, and rich men rule the law;
The wealth of climes, where savage nations roam,
Pillaged from slaves, to purchase slaves at home;
Fear, pity, justice, indignation start,
Tear off reserve, and bare my swelling heart;
Till half a patriot, half a coward grown,
I fly from petty tyrants to the throne.

Yes, brother, curse with me that baleful hour
When first ambition struck at regal power;
And, thus polluting honour in its source,
Gave wealth to sway the mind with double force.
Have we not seen, round Britain's peopled shore,
Her useful sons exchanged for useless ore;

Seen all her triumphs but destruction haste.
Like flaring tapers, brightening as they waste;
Seen opulence, her grandeur to maintain,
Lead stern depopulation in her train,
And over fields where scatter'd hamlets rose,
In barren, solitary pomp repose?
Have we not seen, at pleasure's lordly call,
The smiling, long-frequented village fall?
Beheld the duteous son, the sire decay'd,
The modest matron, and the blushing maid,
Forced from their homes, a melancholy train,
To traverse climes beyond the western main;
Where wild Oswego spreads her swamps around,
And Niagara stuns with thundering sound?

E'en now, perhaps, as there some pilgrim strays
Through tangled forests, and through dangerous ways,
Where beasts with man divided empire claim,
And the brown Indian marks with murderous aim;
There, while above the giddy tempest flies,
And all around distressful yells arise,
The pensive exile, bending with his woe,
To stop too fearful, and too faint to go,[1]
Casts a long look where England's glories shine,
And bids his bosom sympathise with mine.

Vain, very vain, my weary search to find
That bliss which only centres in the mind;
Why have I stray'd from pleasure and repose,
To seek a good each government bestows?
In every government, though terrors reign,
Though tyrant kings or tyrant laws restrain,
How small, of all that human hearts endure,
That part which laws or kings can cause or cure!
Still to ourselves in every place consign'd,
Our own felicity we make or find:

[1] *To stop too fearful, and too faint to go.*—Boswell tells us that this line was written by Dr. Johnson One may well believe the statement. Goldsmith would scarcely have written a line so inharmonious as to produce in the compass of nine words the same sound four times. Boswell states that Johnson marked with a pencil also the concluding ten lines of the poem, except the last couplet but one; and that the Doctor added—"These are all of which I can be sure."

Where beasts with man divided empire claim.
And the brown Indian marks with murderous aim

With secret course, which no loud storms annoy,
Glides the smooth current of domestic joy.
The lifted axe, the agonising wheel,
Luke's iron crown,[1] and Damien's bed of steel,[2]
To men remote from power but rarely known,
Leave reason, faith, and conscience all our own.

[1] *Luke's iron crown.*—George Dosa, or Doscha, headed an insurrection of the Hungarian peasants (called Szeklers or Sicules) against the nobles in the reign of Ladislas II. in 1513, and was proclaimed king. They committed great cruelties, till they were defeated upon several occasions by the Veivode of Transylvania, John Zapolski, and finally subdued, when George and his brother Luke were taken prisoners. George (not Luke), in derision, was placed on a throne, with a crown on his head and a sceptre in his hand, all of red-hot iron; while still alive his veins were opened, and Luke was forced to drink the blood that flowed from them. The horrible tortures which they suffered are detailed in the "Nouvelle Biographie Universelle," *voce* Dosa. The name of Szeklers obviously gave rise to the mistake of calling these brothers by the name of Szeck. It is remarkable that in the Abbé Brenner's "Histoire des Revolutions de Hongaries," La Haye, 1739, vol. i., p. 99, George is called by the name of Szekely.

[2] *Damien's bed of steel.*—Robert Francois Damien, known as Robert le Diable, was a man of savage and moody disposition and disordered intellect. Upon the 5th of January, 1757, he attempted the life of Louis XV., by wounding him with a knife as he was going into his carriage. Damien was seized, and put to the torture to force a confession of his accomplices, but in vain. He was put to death on the 28th of March, in a manner too revolting to detail, and bore his tortures with unflinching firmness. See "Nouvelle Biographie Universelle," *voce* Damien. Tom Davis, in a letter to Granger, says that by the "bed of steel" Goldsmith meant the rack.

The Haunch of Venison.

A POETICAL EPISTLE TO LORD CLARE.

INTRODUCTION.

AMONGST the intimate friends of Goldsmith was one Robert Nugent—an Irishman, jovial, social, and not over refined—tall, awkward, good-humoured, and bold—possessed of a ready wit and no mean poetical ability. He was for many years an active member of the House of Commons, and on the accession of the Chatham Administration he was raised to the peerage, in 1766, as Baron Nugent and Viscount Clare, and ten years afterwards created Earl Nugent. The poet passed much time with the peer at his seat at Gosfield Park, in Essex, in unrestrained and joyous intercourse. On one occasion—probably early in 1771—the peer sent the poet a haunch of venison, and received in return the poem which follows, and which was not published till 1776.

This charming little piece has done more to preserve the memory of Lord Nugent than either his politics or his poetry. His peerage of Clare is extinct, but the name of the donor of 'the haunch of venison' will be always remembered.

Lively, graceful, and finished; harmless in its satire, and comic in its delineations of character, no doubt drawn from the life, it nowhere violates good taste or good feeling. Mr. Croker observes that Goldsmith "ought to have confessed that he borrowed the idea and some of the details from Boileau." Such a confession was needless; and to whom should it have been made? The *jeu d'esprit* was for the eye of a friend, and, when published after his death, it was unnecessary to draw attention to (what every scholar would have recognised) the resemblance to the few lines quoted by Croker, for it goes no farther.

THANKS, my lord, for your ven'son, for finer or fatter
Ne'er ranged in a forest, or smoked in a platter,
The haunch was a picture for painters to study,
The fat was so white, and the lean was so ruddy;
Though my stomach was sharp, I could scarce help regretting
To spoil such a delicate picture by eating:
I had thoughts in my chamber to place it in view,
To be shown to my friends as a piece of vertù;

As in some Irish houses, where things are so-so,
One gammon of bacon hangs up for a show;
But, for eating a rasher of what they take pride in,
They'd as soon think of eating the pan it is fried in.
But hold—let me pause—don't I hear you pronounce,
This tale of the bacon's a damnable bounce?
Well, suppose it a bounce—sure a poet may try,
By a bounce now and then, to get courage to fly.

But, my lord, it's no bounce: I protest in my turn,
It's a truth, and your lordship may ask Mr. Byrne.[1]
To go on with my tale, as I gazed on the haunch,
I thought of a friend that was trusty and staunch;
So I cut it, and sent it to Reynolds undrest,
To paint it or eat it, just as he liked best.
Of the neck and the breast I had next to dispose—
'Twas a neck and a breast that might rival Monroe's:[2]
But in parting with these I was puzzled again,
With the how and the who, and the where and the when,
There's H—d,[3] and C—y,[4] and H—rth,[5] and H—ff,[6]
I think they love ven'son—I know they love beef;
There's my countryman Higgins—oh! let him alone,
For making a blunder, or picking a bone.
But hang it! to poets who seldom can eat
Your very good mutton's a very good treat;
Such dainties to them their health it might hurt,
It's like sending them ruffles when wanting a shirt.
While thus I debated, in reverie centred,
An acquaintance, a friend as he call'd himself, enter'd:
An under-bred, fine-spoken fellow was he,
And he smiled as he look'd at the ven'son and me.

[1] *Mr. Byrne.*—Michael Byrne, Esq., of Cabinteely, in the county of Dublin; son of Robert Byrne and Clare, sister of Lord Clare.

[2] *Monroe's.*—Dorothy Monroe, a celebrated beauty of the day.

[3] *H——d.*—Possibly the Hon. Charles Howard, afterwards tenth duke of Norfolk, one of the literary men of the day.

[4] *C——y.*—George Coleman, the celebrated dramatic writer, and lessee of Covent Garden Theatre, and afterwards of the Haymarket; born in 1733, and died in 1794.

[5] *H——rth.*—The great painter, William Hogarth, cannot be intended, as he died in 1764, previous to the elevation of Nugent to the peerage. Probably the person meant was Dr. John Hawkesworth, well known for his papers in "The Adventurer," and his tale of "Almoran and Hamet." He was born in 1715, and died in 1773.

[6] *H——ff.*—Paul Hiffernan, a dramatic and periodical writer, born in Dublin in 1719. He was educated for the priesthood in France, and returned to his native city to practise medicine. He went to London, became known to Garrick and Murphy, and wrote four plays, one of which was successful. He was a man of some genius, but of coarse mind and offensive manners, led a dissipated and disreputable life, and died in poverty in London, 1777.

EDMUND BURKE.

"What have we got here?—Why, this is good eating!
Your own, I suppose, or is it in waiting?"
"Why, whose should it be?" cried I. with a flounce;
"I get these things often"—but that was a bounce:
"Some lords, my acquaintance, that settle the nation,
Are pleased to be kind—but I hate ostentation."

"If that be the case, then," cried he, very gay,
"I'm glad I have taken this house in my way.
To-morrow you take a poor dinner with me;
No words—I insist on't—precisely at three:
We'll have Johnson and Burke, all the wits will be there;
My acquaintance is slight, or I'd ask my Lord Clare.
And, now that I think on't, as I am a sinner,
We wanted this venison to make out the dinner.

What say you ?—a pasty, it shall and it must,
And my wife, little Kitty, is famous for crust.
Here, porter—this ven'son with me to Mile-end :
No stirring, I beg, my dear friend—my dear friend !"
Thus, snatching his hat, he brush'd off like the wind,
And the porter and eatables follow'd behind.

Left alone to reflect, having emptied my shelf,
And "nobody with me at sea but myself;"
Tho' I could not help thinking my gentleman hasty,
Yet Johnson, and Burke, and a good ven'son pasty,
Were things that I never disliked in my life,
Though clogg'd with a coxcomb, and Kitty his wife.
So next day, in due splendour to make my approach,
I drove to his door in my own hackney coach.
When come to the place where we all were to dine
(A chair-lumber'd closet, just twelve feet by nine),
My friend bade me welcome, but struck me quite dumb,
With tidings that Johnson and Burke would not come ![1]
"For I knew it," he cried, "both eternally fail,
The one with his speeches, and t'other with Thrale ;
But no matter, I'll warrant we make up the party,
With two full as clever, and ten times as hearty.
The one is a Scotchman, the other a Jew,
They're both of them merry, and authors like you ;
The one writes the Snarler, the other the Scourge :
Some think he writes Cinna—he owns to Panurge."
While thus he described them by trade and by name,
They enter'd, and dinner was served as they came.

At the top a fried liver and bacon were seen,
At the bottom was tripe, in a swinging tureen ;
At the sides there was spinach and pudding made hot ;
In the middle a place where the pasty—was not.
Now, my lord, as for tripe, it's my utter aversion,
And your bacon I hate like a Turk or a Persian ;

[1] *With tidings that Johnson and Burke would not come.*—"Goldsmith's poetry presents one well-known and remarkable instance of how he appreciated Burke and Johnson. In 'The Haunch of Venison,' partially an imitation of the Third Satire of Boileau, when Goldsmith came to the French poet's line announcing the non-arrival of the promised grand guests—

'Nous n'avons, m'a-t-il dit, ni Lambert ni Molière'—

he put in the place of the original names those of the two supreme objects of his own admiration."—*Serjeant Burke's Life of Edmund Burke.*

So there I sat stuck, like a horse in a pound,
While the bacon and liver went merrily round:
But what vex'd me most, was that d—'d Scottish rogue,
With his long-winded speeches, his smiles, and his brogue;
And "Madam," quoth he, "may this bit be my poison,
A prettier dinner I never set eyes on!
Pray a slice of your liver, though may I be curst,
But I've ate of your tripe till I'm ready to burst."
"The tripe!" quoth the Jew, with his chocolate cheek,
"I could dine on this tripe seven days in the week:
I like these here dinners so pretty and small;
But your friend there, the doctor, eats nothing at all."
"Oh, ho!" quoth my friend, "he'll come on in a trice,
He's keeping a corner for something that's nice:
There's pasty."—"A pasty!" repeated the Jew;
"I don't care if I keep a corner for't too."
"What the de'il, mon, a pasty!" re-echoed the Scot;
"Though splitting, I'll still keep a corner for that."
"We'll all keep a corner," the lady cried out;
"We'll all keep a corner," was echoed about.
While thus we resolved, and the pasty delay'd,
With looks that quite petrified, enter'd the maid;
A visage so sad, and so pale with affright,
Waked Priam in drawing his curtains by night.
But we quickly found out (for who could mistake her?)
That she came with some terrible news from the baker:
And so it fell out, for that negligent sloven
Had shut out the pasty on shutting his oven.
Sad Philomel thus—but let similes drop—
And now that I think on't, the story may stop.
To be plain, my good lord, it's but labour misplaced,
To send such good verses to one of your taste:
You've got an odd something—a kind of discerning—
A relish—a taste—sicken'd over by learning;
At least, it's your temper, as very well known,
That you think very slightly of all that's your own:
So, perhaps, in your habits of thinking amiss,
You may make a mistake, and think slightly of this.

RETALIATION.

INTRODUCTION.

THIS poem is invested with more than ordinary interest, for it is the last production of Goldsmith's pen. Written at intervals, during bodily suffering, and while his mind was often ill at ease—left, indeed, unfinished when the hand of Death was laid upon him — it still exhibits his genius in undiminished brightness. Had he not left this composition behind him, posterity could not have formed an adequate estimate of the powers of Goldsmith. Without it we could not have known what a high order of wit, in its truest sense, he possessed; with what an accurate sense for discriminating character he was endowed, and with what terse and epigrammatic vigour he could delineate it. The portraits are all drawn with force—some of them with the skill and truth of a master. The strokes of satire, interspersed, are, like boreal lightning, luminous yet innocuous; and the praise which he bestows, though occasionally of the highest, is never offensive. A gentler vengeance was never inflicted, a kindlier retaliation never administered.

We cannot better introduce the poem than by transcribing Garrick's account of its origin, first given to the world by Mr. Peter Cunningham in his admirable edition of Goldsmith's works :—

At a meeting[1] of a company of gentlemen, who were well known to each other, and diverting themselves, among many other things, with the peculiar oddities of Dr. Goldsmith, who never would allow a superior in any art, from writing poetry down to dancing a hornpipe, the Doctor with great eagerness insisted upon trying his epigrammatic powers with Mr. Garrick, and each of them was to write the other's epitaph. Mr. Garrick immediately said that his epitaph was finished, and spoke the following distich extempore :—

"Here lies NOLLY Goldsmith, for shortness call'd Noll,
Who wrote like an angel, but talk'd like poor Poll."

Goldsmith, upon the company's laughing very heartily, grew very thoughtful, and either would not, or could not, write anything at that time; however, he went to work, and some weeks after produced the following printed poem, called "RETALIATION," which has been much admired, and gone through several editions. The publick in general have been mistaken in imagining that this poem was written in anger by the Doctor; it was just the contrary; the whole on all sides was done with the greatest good humour; and the following poems in manuscript were written by several of the gentlemen on purpose to provoke the Doctor to an answer, which came forth at last with great credit to him in "RETALIATION."

D. GARRICK [MS.]

[1] The place referred to was not the "Turk's Head," as sometimes supposed, but "St. James's Coffee House," frequented by Addison and Steele; and, in later times, by Goldsmith, Garrick, and their friends. It was the last house but one on the south-west corner of St. James's Street. It was taken down about 1806, and a large pile of buildings, looking down Pall Mall, erected on its site.

RETALIATION.

OF old, when Scarron[1] his companions invited,
Each guest brought his dish, and the feast was united;
If our landlord supplies us with beef and with fish,
Let each guest bring himself, and he brings the best dish:
Our dean[2] shall be venison, just fresh from the plains;
Our Burke[3] shall be tongue, with the garnish of brains;
Our Will[4] shall be wild-fowl, of excellent flavour,
And Dick,[5] with his pepper, shall heighten the savour;
Our Cumberland's[6] sweet-bread its place shall obtain,
And Douglas[7] is pudding, substantial and plain;
Our Garrick's[8] a salad—for in him we see
Oil, vinegar, sugar, and saltness agree;
To make out the dinner, full certain I am,
That Ridge[9] is anchovy, and Reynolds[10] is lamb;

[1] *Scarron.*—Paul Scarron, known by the *sobriquet* of "Cul de Jatte," from his deformity, was one of the wittiest writers of comedy in France in the seventeenth century. Despite of his physical infirmities and sufferings, he passed through life laughing and making others laugh, and died (1660) with a joke about death on his lips. Goldsmith translated his "Roman Comique."

[2] *Our Dean.*—Dr. Thomas Barnard, Dean of Derry, and a member of the Literary Club. He was a student in Trinity College, Dublin, at the same time as Goldsmith, though it does not appear that they were acquainted there. He was a man of wit and learning, and a great friend of Johnson's, whose rudeness to him, notwithstanding, on one occasion, gave rise to some clever verses of Barnard's. He was afterwards Bishop of Killaloe, and, finally, of Limerick.

[3] *Our Burke.*—Edmund Burke, the great statesman, then rising high in public estimation as "the first man in the Commons." He was an original member of the Literary Club.

[4] *Our Will.*—William Burke, a cousin of Edmund's, and a man of considerable learning. He wrote many pieces of merit both in prose and in verse, some of which, under the signature of "Valens," were attributed to Edmund. He died in 1798. See Prior's "Life of Burke."

[5] *And Dick.*—Richard Burke, a younger brother of Edmund, distinguished as a wit, a politician, a writer, and a lawyer, of whom Lord Mansfield had a high opinion. He became one of the Secretaries of State in 1782, and afterwards Recorder of Bristol. He was celebrated for his wit and humour, and used to play off practical jokes on Edmund and other friends. Both his leg and arm were fractured. He died in 1794.

[6] *Our Cumberland.*—Richard Cumberland, dramatist, novelist, and poet. He accompanied Lord Halifax to Ireland, and was subsequently sent on a mission to Spain. He is now best known by his memoirs. He was a generous and honourable man, but vain and irritable, and was the original of Sir Fretful Plagiary, in Sheridan's "Critic." He died in 1811.

[7] *Douglas.*—John Douglas, afterwards Bishop of Carlisle, whence he was translated to Salisbury. He was a good scholar, and possessed of taste and a sound, logical understanding. He published an able defence of Milton, against Lauder's charge of plagiary; a powerful essay, in answer to Hume, on the subject of miracles; and many miscellaneous works. He died in 1807.

[8] *Our Garrick.*—David Garrick, the greatest histrionic genius that England has produced. To him the Stage owes, in a great measure, the restoration of Shakespeare, and its purification from the gross licentiousness which disgraced it from the time of Charles II. He was for many years manager of Drury Lane; and besides some farces and prologues, he wrote occasional pieces, songs, and epigrams. He died in 1799.

[9] *Ridge.*—John Ridge was called to the Irish Bar in 1762, and retired from practice in 1776. As he disappears from the list of the profession in 1778, I presume that he was then dead.

[10] *Reynolds.*—Sir Joshua Reynolds, the founder of the English School of Painting, the first President of the Royal Academy, the Romulus of the Literary Club, and the affable host of the celebrated Leicester Square dinners. "One of the most memorable men of his time. There was no more amiable man or delightful companion than Reynolds." When studying

DAVID GARRICK.

That Hickey's[1] a capon, and by the same rule,
Magnanimous Goldsmith a gooseberry fool.
At a dinner so various, at such a repast,
Who'd not be a glutton, and stick to the last?
Here, waiter, more wine! let me sit while I'm able,
Till all my companions sink under the table;
Then, with chaos and blunders encircling my head,
Let me ponder, and tell what I think of the dead.

Here lies the good dean, re-united to earth,
Who mix'd reason with pleasure, and wisdom with mirth:

in Rome he caught cold, which resulted in permanent deafness, and obliged him to use an ear-trumpet. This, and his habit of taking snuff, are pleasantly alluded to in the last lines that Goldsmith ever wrote. Sir Joshua was a distinguished art-writer, and left fifteen discourses delivered at the Academy, and some contributions to general literature. He died in 1792.

[1] *Hickey.*—Thomas Hickey, an Irishman, and an attorney and friend of Goldsmith, at whose expense he was in the habit of indulging his somewhat coarse raillery. He joined Goldsmith at Paris in 1770, and did not fail to bring back some ludicrous stories of the poet. I cannot find his name amongst the Irish practitioners. I presume he was a member of the profession in England.

If he had any faults, he has left us in doubt;
At least in six weeks I could not find 'em out;
Yet some have declared, and it can't be denied 'em,
That sly-boots was cursedly cunning to hide 'em.

Here lies our good Edmund, whose genius was such,
We scarcely can praise it, or blame it, too much;
Who, born for the universe, narrow'd his mind,
And to party gave up what was meant for mankind.
Though fraught with all learning, yet straining his throat
To persuade Tommy Townshend[1] to lend him a vote;
Who, too deep for his hearers, still went on refining,
And thought of convincing while they thought of dining:
Though equal to all things, for all things unfit,
Too nice for a statesman, too proud for a wit;
For a patriot too cool; for a drudge, disobedient;
And too fond of the *right* to pursue the *expedient*.
In short, 'twas his fate, unemploy'd, or in place, sir,
To eat mutton cold, and cut blocks with a razor.

Here lies honest William, whose heart was a mint,
While the owner ne'er knew half the good that was in't;
The pupil of impulse, it forced him along,
His conduct still right, with his argument wrong;
Still aiming at honour, yet fearing to roam,
The coachman was tipsy, the chariot drove home.
Would you ask for his merits? alas! he had none:
What was good was spontaneous, his faults were his own.

Here lies honest Richard, whose fate I must sigh at;
Alas! that such frolic should now be so quiet!
What spirits were his! what wit and what whim!
Now breaking a jest, and now breaking a limb;
Now wrangling and grumbling to keep up the ball;
Now teasing and vexing, yet laughing at all!

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[1] *Tommy Townshend.*—"One of the most active of the second-rate politicians, and the great go-between of the attempted alliance between the Chatham and Rockingham Whigs. Tommy Townshend—so called, not satirically, but to distinguish him from his father."—*Forster.* He sat for Whitchurch, and was afterwards Lord Sidney.

In short, so provoking a devil was Dick,
We wish'd him full ten times a day at Old Nick;
But, missing his mirth and agreeable vein,
As often we wish'd to have Dick back again.

Here Cumberland lies, having acted his parts,
The Terence of England, the mender of hearts;
A flattering painter, who made it his care
To draw men as they ought to be, not as they are.
His gallants are all faultless, his women divine,
And Comedy wonders at being so fine:
Like a tragedy queen he has dizen'd her out,
Or rather like Tragedy giving a rout.
His fools have their follies so lost in a crowd
Of virtues and feelings, that Folly grows proud;
And coxcombs alike in their failings alone,
Adopting his portraits, are pleased with their own.
Say where has our poet this malady caught,
Or wherefore his characters thus without fault?
Say, was it that, vainly directing his view,
To find out men's virtues, and finding them few,
Quite sick of pursuing each troublesome elf,
He grew lazy at last, and drew for himself?

Here Douglas retires from his toils to relax,
The scourge of impostors, the terror of quacks:
Come, all ye quack bards, and ye quacking divines,
Come and dance on the spot where your tyrant reclines.
When satire and censure encircled his throne,
I fear'd for your safety, I fear'd for my own;
But now he is gone, and we want a detector,
Our Dodds[1] shall be pious, our Kenricks[2] shall lecture;
Macpherson[3] write bombast, and call it a style,
Our Townshend make speeches, and I shall compile;

[1] *Our Dodds.*—The Rev. Wm. Dodd, LL D., a man of learning and eloquence, but without principle or integrity. He was a popular preacher, wrote a novel of doubtful morality, published numerous compilations, and edited the "Christian Magazine." He ended a discreditable life on the gallows, for forgery, on the 24th of February, 1777.

[2] *Our Kenricks.*—William Kenrick, a hack-writer of moderate ability and immoderate malignity. He assailed Johnson, who treated him with silent contempt; and attacked Goldsmith on several occasions, in reviews and magazines. Bickerstaff describes him as "the vilest miscreant that ever dishonoured a pretension to literature." Boswell says he obtained his degree of LL.D. from a Scotch university. "He used to lecture," says Mr. Forster, "on every conceivable subject, from Shakespeare to perpetual motion." Finally, he took to drinking, destroyed his constitution, and died in 1779.

[3] *Macpherson.*—James Macpherson, the author of the poems of Ossian, of a prose translation of the "Iliad" of Homer.

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

New Lauders[1] and Bowers[2] the Tweed shall cross over,
No countryman living their tricks to discover;
Detection her taper shall quench to a spark,
And Scotchman meet Scotchman, and cheat in the dark.

Here lies David Garrick, describe me who can,
An abridgment of all that was pleasant in man:
As an actor, confess'd without rival to shine;
As a wit, if not first, in the very first line;

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and other works. Dr. Johnson denounced the former to be "as gross an imposition as ever the world was troubled with." Macpherson wrote an angry letter; and Johnson, in reply, called him a cheat and a ruffian. Macpherson never produced the Ossian MSS., and the authenticity of the poems is still an unsettled question. He died in 1796.

[1] *Lauders.*—William Lauder, a Scotchman, who is now remembered only for his attack upon Milton, whom he accused of plagiarisms. Dr. Douglas, in his defence of Milton, convicted Lauder of forgery and imposture in his quotations, who was forced by Dr Johnson to subscribe a confession, which was published. Lauder lost character, was ruined and despised, and went to Barbadoes, where he died in 1771.

[2] *Bowers.*—Archibald Bower, a Scotch Roman Catholic. He entered, as a noviciate, the Order of Jesuits, at Rome; became a professor, at Macerata; and after various adventures came to England, was introduced to Clarke and Berkeley, and conformed to the Church of England. Lord Lyttleton gave him the custody of his sons, and he wrote for the booksellers. He rejoined the Jesuits, and again left them. His principal work was a history of the Popes. He died in 1765

Yet, with talents like these, and an excellent heart,
The man had his failings, a dupe to his art.
Like an ill-judging beauty, his colours he spread,
And beplaster'd with rouge his own natural red.
On the stage he was natural, simple, affecting;
'Twas only that when he was off he was acting.
With no reason on earth to go out of his way,
He turned and he varied full ten times a day;
Though secure of our hearts, yet confoundedly sick,
If they were not his own by finessing and trick:
He cast off his friends as a huntsman his pack,
For he knew, when he pleased, he could whistle them back.
Of praise a mere glutton, he swallow'd what came,
And the puff of a dunce he mistook it for fame;
Till his relish grown callous, almost to disease,
Who pepper'd the highest was surest to please.
But let us be candid, and speak out our mind,
If dunces applauded, he paid them in kind.
Ye Kenricks, ye Kellys,[1] and Woodfalls,[2] so grave,
What a commerce was yours, while you got and you gave!
How did Grub-street re-echo the shouts that you raised,
While he was be-Roscius'd and you were be-praised!
But peace to his spirit, wherever it flies,
To act as an angel, and mix with the skies:
Those poets who owe their best fame to his skill,
Shall still be his flatterers, go where he will;
Old Shakespeare receive him with praise and with love,
And Beaumonts and Bens be his Kellys above.

Here Hickey reclines, a most blunt, pleasant creature,
And slander itself must allow him good-nature:
He cherish'd his friend, and he relish'd a bumper,
Yet one fault he had, and that one was a thumper!
Perhaps you may ask if the man was a miser?
I answer, No, no, for he always was wiser.

[1] *Ye Kellys.*—Hugh Kelly, an Irishman, who went to London, and took to writing for periodicals. Garrick patronised him, and under his auspices he produced his first comedy, "False Delicacy," which was very successful. "A Word to the Wise" (for which, after his death, Johnson wrote a prologue), "Clementina," "The School for Wives," and other pieces, were written by him. He was called to the Bar in 1774, and was making rapid proficiency, when he died, after a short illness, in 1777.

[2] *Woodfalls.*—William Woodfall, the printer of "Junius's Letters" in the *Public Advertiser*, and subsequently proprietor and editor of the *Morning Chronicle*. He died in 1803.

Too courteous, perhaps, or obligingly flat?
His very worst foe can't accuse him of that.
Perhaps he confided in men as they go,
And so was too foolishly honest? Ah, no!
Then what was his failing? come tell it, and burn ye.
He was—could he help it?—a special attorney.

Here Reynolds is laid, and to tell you my mind,
He has not left a wiser or better behind;
His pencil was striking, resistless, and grand;
His manners were gentle, complying, and bland;
Still born to improve us in every part,
His pencil our faces, his manners our heart:
To coxcombs averse, yet most civilly steering,
When they judged without skill, he was still hard of hearing!
When they talk'd of their Raphaels, Correggios, and stuff,
He shifted his trumpet, and only took snuff.

STANZAS

ON THE TAKING OF QUEBEC, AND DEATH OF GENERAL WOLFE.

AMIDST the clamour of exulting joys,
Which triumph forces from the patriot heart,
Grief dares to mingle her soul-piercing voice,
And quells the raptures which from pleasure start.

O Wolfe! to thee a streaming flood of woe,
Sighing, we pay, and think e'en conquest dear;
Quebec in vain shall teach our breast to glow,
While thy sad fate extorts the heart-wrung tear.

Alive, the foe thy dreadful vigour fled,
And saw thee fall with joy-pronouncing eyes;
Yet they shall know thou conquerest, though dead,
Since from thy tomb a thousand heroes rise.

AN ELEGY

ON THE GLORY OF HER SEX, MRS. MARY BLAIZE.

GOOD people all, with one accord,
Lament for Madam Blaize,
Who never wanted a good word,—
From those who spoke her praise.

The needy seldom pass'd the door,
And always found her kind:
She freely lent to all the poor,—
Who left a pledge behind.

She strove the neighbourhood to please,
With manners wondrous winning;
And never follow'd wicked ways,—
Unless when she was sinning.

At church in silks and satins new,
With hoop of monstrous size,
She never slumber'd in her pew,—
But when she shut her eyes.

Her love was sought, I do aver,
By twenty beaux and more;
The king himself has follow'd her,—
When she has walk'd before.

But now her wealth and finery fled,
Her hangers-on cut short all;
The doctors found, when she was dead,—
Her last disorder mortal.

Let us lament, in sorrow sore,
For Kent Street well may say,
That had she lived a twelvemonth more,—
She had not died to-day.

A MADRIGAL.

WEEPING, murmuring, complaining,
Lost to every gay delight;
Mira, too sincere for feigning,
Fears th' approaching bridal night.

Yet why impair thy bright perfection,
Or dim thy beauty with a tear?
Had Mira follow'd my direction,
She long had wanted cause of fear.

She Stoops to Conquer

or

The Mistakes of a Night.

INTRODUCTION.

WHATEVER be the relative merits of the two Comedies that Goldsmith has left us—and each has its advocates for the superiority—there is no doubt that "She Stoops to Conquer" is that upon which his character as a dramatic writer most securely rests. It was produced for the first time on the 15th of March, 1773, at Covent Garden; was received with a heartiness of applause that carried everything—even the solitary hiss of an envious enemy—before it, and secured its triumph—a triumph that was nightly renewed till the end of the season. The main incident in the piece, round which all the others revolve, is the mistaking Squire Hardcastle's house for a country inn, an idea suggested by a joke played off on Goldsmith in his sixteenth year by a wag in Ardagh, who directed him to Squire Fetherstone's, as the village inn, where the joke was humoured and undiscovered till night. The play is full of broad, farcical humour, relieved with some passages of a sentimental nature; and, with one or two exceptions, there is no violation of decorum. Tony Lumpkin is a character *sui generis;* one that has come to have an individual reality, as well known to us as "Bob Acres" or "Scrub." Old Hardcastle, with all his old-fashioned whimsicalities, is true to nature—overdrawn just enough for stage effect; and the extravagances of his wife are highly entertaining. There is a constant vivacity in the dialogue that amuses, and a frequent recurrence of the ludicrous, which is irresistibly provocative of laughter, and makes us feel the truth of Dr. Johnson's criticism: "I know no comedy, for many years, that has so much exhilarated an audience; that has answered so much the great end of comedy, making an audience merry."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR CHARLES MARLOW.
YOUNG MARLOW (HIS SON).
HARDCASTLE.
HASTINGS.
TONY LUMPKIN.
DIGGORY.

MRS. HARDCASTLE.
MISS HARDCASTLE.
MISS NEVILLE.
MAID.

Landlord, Servants, &c. &c.

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER;

OR,

THE MISTAKES OF A NIGHT.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A scene in an old-fashioned house.*

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE *and* MR. HARDCASTLE.

Mrs. Hard. I vow, Mr. Hardcastle, you're very particular. Is there a creature in the whole country, but ourselves, that does not take a trip to town now and then to rub off the rust a little? There's the two Miss Hoggs, and our neighbour Mrs. Grigsby, go to take a month's polishing every winter.

Hard. Ay, and bring back vanity and affectation to last them the whole year. I wonder why London cannot keep its own fools at home. In my time, the follies of the town crept slowly among us, but now they travel faster than a stage-coach. Its fopperies come down, not only as inside passengers, but in the very basket.

Mrs. Hard. Ay, *your* times were fine times, indeed; you have been telling us of *them* for many a long year. Here we live in an old rumbling mansion, that looks for all the world like an inn, but that we never see company. Our best visitors are old Mrs. Oddfish, the curate's wife, and little Cripplegate, the lame dancing-master; and all our entertainment, your old stories of Prince Eugene and the Duke of Marlborough. I hate such old-fashioned trumpery.

Hard. And I love it. I love everything that's old: old friends, old times, old manners, old books, old wine; and, I believe, Dorothy (*taking her hand*), you'll own I have been pretty fond of an old wife.

Mrs. Hard. Lord, Mr. Hardcastle, you're for ever at your Dorothys, and your old wives. You may be a Darby, but I'll be no Joan, I promise you. I'm not so old as you'd make me, by more than one good year. Add twenty to twenty, and make money of that.

Hard. Let me see; twenty added to twenty, makes just fifty and seven.

Mrs. Hard. It's false, Mr. Hardcastle: I was but twenty when Tony, that I had by Mr. Lumpkin, my first husband, was born; and he's not come to years of discretion yet.

Hard. Nor ever will, I dare answer for him. Ay, you have taught *him* finely.

Mrs. Hard. No matter, Tony Lumpkin has a good fortune. My son is not to live by his learning. I don't think a boy wants much learning to spend fifteen hundred a year.

Hard. Learning, quotha! a mere composition of tricks and mischief.

Mrs. Hard. Humour, my dear: nothing but humour. Come, Mr. Hardcastle, you must allow the boy a little humour.

Hard. I'd sooner allow him a horse-pond. If burning the footman's shoes, frighting the maids, worrying the kittens—be humour, he has it. It was but yesterday he fastened my wig to the back of my chair, and when I went to make a bow, I popt my bald head in Mrs. Frizzle's face.

Mrs. Hard. And am I to blame? The poor boy was always too sickly to do any good. A school would be his death. When he comes to be a little stronger, who knows what a year or two's Latin may do for him?

Hard. Latin for him! A cat and fiddle. No, no, the ale-house and the stable are the only schools he'll ever go to.

Mrs. Hard. Well, we must not snub the poor boy now, for I believe we shan't have him long among us. Anybody that looks in his face may see he's consumptive.

Hard. Ay, if growing too fat be one of the symptoms.

Mrs. Hard. He coughs sometimes.

Hard. Yes, when his liquor goes the wrong way.

Mrs. Hard. I'm actually afraid of his lungs.

Hard. And truly so am I; for he sometimes whoops like a speaking trumpet.—(TONY *hallooing behind the scenes*)—Oh, there he goes—a very consumptive figure, truly.

Enter TONY, *crossing the stage.*

Mrs. Hard. Tony, where are you going, my charmer? Won't you give papa and me a little of your company, lovee?

Tony. I'm in haste, mother; I cannot stay.

Mrs. Hard. You shan't venture out this raw evening, my dear; you look most shockingly.

Tony. I can't stay, I tell you. The Three Pigeons expects me down every moment. There's some fun going forward.

Hard. Ay; the ale-house, the old place: I thought so.

Mrs. Hard. A low, paltry set of fellows.

Tony. Not so low neither. There's Dick Muggins the exciseman, Jack Slang the horse-doctor, little Aminadab that grinds the music-box, and Tom Twist that spins the pewter platter.

Mrs. Hard. Pray, my dear, disappoint them for one night at least.

Tony. As for disappointing *them*, I should not so much mind; but I can't abide to disappoint *myself*.

Mrs. Hard. (*Detaining him.*) You shan't go.

Tony. I will, I tell you.

Mrs. Hard. I say you shan't.

Miss Neville. Bless me! sure no accident has happened among the canary birds, or the gold fishes. Or, has the last novel been too moving?

Miss Hardcastle. No, nothing of all this. I have been threatened—I can scarce get it out—I have been threatened with a lover.

Act I. Scene I.

Tony. We'll see which is the strongest, you or I!

(*Exit, hauling her out.*)

HARDCASTLE, *solus.*

Hard. Ay, there goes a pair that only spoil each other. But is not the whole age in a combination to drive sense and discretion out of doors? There's my pretty darling Kate; the fashions of the times have almost infected her too. By living a year or two in town, she is as fond of gauze, and French frippery, as the best of them.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE.

Hard. Blessings on my pretty innocence! Drest out as usual, my Kate. Goodness! What a quantity of superfluous silk hast thou got about thee, girl! I could never teach the fools of this age that the indigent world could be clothed out of the trimmings of the vain.

Miss Hard. You know our agreement, sir. You allow me the morning to receive and pay visits, and to dress in my own manner; and in the evening, I put on my housewife's dress to please you.

Hard. Well, remember I insist on the terms of our agreement; and, by the bye, I believe I shall have occasion to try your obedience this very evening.

Miss Hard. I protest, sir, I don't comprehend your meaning.

Hard. Then, to be plain with you, Kate, I expect the young gentleman I have chosen to be your husband from town this very day. I have his father's letter, in which he informs me his son is set out, and that he intends to follow himself shortly after.

Miss Hard. Indeed! I wish I had known something of this before. Bless me, how shall I behave? It's a thousand to one I shan't like him; our meeting will be so formal, and so like a thing of business, that I shall find no room for friendship or esteem.

Hard. Depend upon it, child, I'll never control your choice; but Mr. Marlow, whom I have pitched upon, is the son of my old friend, Sir Charles Marlow, of whom you have heard me talk so often. The young gentleman has been bred a scholar, and is designed for an employment in the service of his country. I am told he's a man of an excellent understanding.

Miss Hard. Is he?

Hard. Very generous.

Miss Hard. I believe I shall like him.

Hard. Young and brave.

Miss Hard. I'm sure I shall like him.

Hard. And very handsome.

Miss Hard. My dear papa, say no more (*kissing his hand*); he's mine, I'll have him!

Hard. And to crown all, Kate, he's one of the most bashful and reserved young fellows in all the world.

Miss Hard. Eh! you have frozen me to death again. That word *reserved*

has undone all the rest of his accomplishments. A reserved lover, it is said, always makes a suspicious husband.

Hard. On the contrary, modesty seldom resides in a breast that is not enriched with nobler virtues. It was the very feature in his character that first struck me.

Miss Hard. He must have more striking features to catch me, I promise you. However, if he be so young, so handsome, and so everything, as you mention, I believe he'll do still. I think I'll have him.

Hard. Ay, Kate, but there is still an obstacle. It's more than an even wager, he may not have *you*.

Miss Hard. My dear papa, why will you mortify one so? Well, if he refuses, instead of breaking my heart at his indifference, I'll only break my glass for its flattery, set my cap to some newer fashion, and look out for some less difficult admirer.

Hard. Bravely resolved! In the meantime I'll go prepare the servants for his reception; as we seldom see company, they want as much training as a company of recruits the first day's muster. (*Exit.*)

MISS HARDCASTLE, *sola.*

Miss Hard. This news of papa's puts me all in a flutter. Young—handsome: these he puts last; but I put them foremost. Sensible—good-natured; I like all that. But then—reserved, and sheepish: that's much against him. Yet, can't he be cured of his timidity, by being taught to be proud of his wife? Yes; and can't I—But, I vow, I'm disposing of the husband, before I have secured the lover.

Enter MISS NEVILLE.

Miss Hard. I'm glad you're come, Neville, my dear. Tell me, Constance: how do I look this evening? Is there anything whimsical about me? Is it one of my well-looking days, child? Am I in face to-day?

Miss Nev. Perfectly, my dear. Yet, now I look again—bless me!—sure no accident has happened among the canary birds, or the gold fishes. Has your brother or the cat been meddling? Or, has the last novel been too moving?

Miss Hard. No; nothing of all this. I have been threatened—I can scarce get it out—I have been threatened with a lover.

Miss Nev. And his name——

Miss Hard. Is Marlow.

Miss Nev. Indeed!

Miss Hard. The son of Sir Charles Marlow.

Miss Nev. As I live, the most intimate friend of Mr. Hastings, *my* admirer. They are never asunder. I believe you must have seen him when we lived in town.

Miss Hard. Never.

Miss Nev. He's a very singular character, I assure you. Among women of reputation and virtue, he is the modestest man alive; but his acquaintance give

him a very different character among creatures of another stamp: you understand me.

Miss Hard. An odd character, indeed. I shall never be able to manage him. What shall I do? Pshaw, think no more of him, but trust to occurrences for success. But how goes on your own affair, my dear? Has my mother been courting you for my brother Tony, as usual?

Miss Nev. I have just come from one of our agreeable tête-à-têtes. She has been saying a hundred tender things, and setting off her pretty monster as the very pink of perfection.

Miss Hard. And her partiality is such, that she actually thinks him so. A fortune like yours is no small temptation. Besides, as she has the sole management of it, I'm not surprised to see her unwilling to let it go out of the family.

Miss Nev. A fortune like mine, which chiefly consists in jewels, is no such mighty temptation. But at any rate, if my dear Hastings be but constant, I make no doubt to be too hard for her at last. However, I let her suppose that I am in love with her son, and she never once dreams that my affections are fixed upon another.

Miss Hard. My good brother holds out stoutly. I could almost love him for hating you so.

Miss Nev. It is a good-natured creature at bottom, and I'm sure would wish to see me married to anybody but himself. But my aunt's bell rings for our afternoon's walk round the improvements. *Allons!* Courage is necessary, as our affairs are critical.

Miss Hard. Would it were bed-time, and all were well. (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE II.—*An ale-house room. Several shabby Fellows, with punch and tobacco.* TONY *at the head of the table, a little higher than the rest: a mallet in his hand.*

Omnes. Hurrea, hurrea, hurrea, bravo!

1 *Fel.* Now, gentlemen, silence for a song. The 'squire is going to knock himself down for a song.

Omnes. Ay, a song, a song!

Tony. Then I'll sing you, gentlemen, a song I made upon this ale-house, the Three Pigeons.

SONG.

Let schoolmasters puzzle their brain,
With grammar, and nonsense, and learning;
Good liquor, I stoutly maintain,
Gives *genus* a better discerning.
Let them brag of their heathenish gods,
Their Lethes, their Styxes, and Stygians;
Their *quis*, and their *quæs*, and their *quods*,
They're all but a parcel of pigeons.
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.

When Methodist preachers come down,
A preaching that drinking is sinful,
I'll wager the rascals a crown,
They always preach best with a skin-full.
But when you come down with your pence,
For a slice of their scurvy religion,
I'll leave it to all men of sense,
But you, my good friend, are the pigeon.
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll,

Then come, put the jorum about,
And let us be merry and clever;
Our hearts and our liquors are stout,
Here's the Three Jolly Pigeons for ever!
Let some cry up woodcock or hare,
Your bustards, your ducks, and your widgeons,
But of all the birds in the air,
Here's a health to the Three Jolly Pigeons!
Toroddle, toroddle, torol,

Omnes. Bravo! bravo!

1 *Fel.* The 'squire has got spunk in him,

2 *Fel.* I loves to hear him sing, bekeays he never gives us nothing that's *low*.

3 *Fel.* Oh, nothing that's *low*, I cannot bear it.

4 *Fel.* The genteel thing is the genteel thing any time. If so be that a gentleman bees in a concatenation accordingly.

3 *Fel.* I like the maxum of it, Master Muggins. What though I am obligated to dance a bear? a man may be a gentleman for all that. May this be my poison, if my bear ever dances but to the very genteelest of tunes; "Water parted," or "The minuet in Ariadne."

2 *Fel.* What a pity it is the 'squire is not come to his own! It would be well for all the publicans within ten miles round of him,

Tony. Ecod, and so it would, Master Slang. I'd then show what it was to keep choice of company.

2 *Fel.* Oh, he takes after his own father for that. To be sure, old 'squire Lumpkin was the finest gentleman I ever set my eyes on. For winding the straight horn, or beating a thicket for a hare, he never had his fellow. It was a saying in the place, that he kept the best horses and dogs in the whole county.

Tony. Ecod, and when I'm of age I'll be my father's son, I promise you! I have been thinking of Bet Bouncer, and the miller's grey mare to begin with. But come, my boys, drink about and be merry, for you pay no reckoning.—Well, Stingo, what's the matter?

Enter LANDLORD.

Land. There be two gentlemen in a post-chaise at the door. They have lost their way upo' the forest; and they are talking something about Mr. Hard-castle.

Tony. As sure as can be, one of them must be the gentleman that's coming down to court my sister. Do they seem to be Londoners?

Land. I believe they may. They look woundily like Frenchmen.

Tony. Then desire them to step this way, and I'll set them right in a twinkling. (*Exit* LANDLORD.) Gentlemen, as they mayn't be good enough company for you, step down for a moment, and I'll be with you in the squeezing of a lemon. (*Exeunt mob.*)

TONY, *solus.*

Tony. Father-in-law has been calling me whelp, and hound, this half year. Now if I pleased, I could be so revenged upon the old grumbletonian. But then I'm afraid—afraid of what? I shall soon be worth fifteen hundred a year, and let him frighten me out of *that* if he can,

Enter LANDLORD *conducting* MARLOW *and* HASTINGS.

Marl. What a tedious, uncomfortable day have we had of it! We were told it was but forty miles across the country, and we have come above three-score.

Hast. And all, Marlow, from that unaccountable reserve of yours, that would not let us inquire more frequently on the way.

Marl. I own, Hastings, I am unwilling to lay myself under an obligation to every one I meet: and often stand the chance of an unmannerly answer.

Hast. At present, however, we are not likely to receive any answer.

Tony. No offence, gentlemen; but I'm told you have been inquiring for one Mr. Hardcastle, in those parts. Do you know what part of the country you are in?

Hast. Not in the least, sir; but should thank you for information.

Tony. Nor the way you came?

Hast. No, sir; but if you can inform us——

Tony. Why, gentlemen, if you know neither the road you are going, nor where you are, nor the road you came, the first thing I have to inform you is, that—you have lost your way.

Marl. We wanted no ghost to tell us that.

Tony. Pray, gentlemen, may I be so bold as to ask the place from whence you came?

Marl. That's not necessary towards directing us where we are to go.

Tony. No offence; but question for question is all fair, you know. Pray, gentlemen, is not this same Hardcastle a cross-grained, old-fashioned, whimsical fellow with an ugly face; a daughter, and a pretty son?

Hast. We have not seen the gentleman; but he has the family you mention.

Tony. The daughter, a tall trapesing, trolloping, talkative May-pole. The son, a pretty, well-bred, agreeable youth, that everybody is fond of.

Marl. Our information differs in this. The daughter is said to be well-bred and beautiful; the son an awkward booby, reared up, and spoiled at his mother's apron-string.

Tony. He-he-hem! Then, gentlemen, all I have to tell you is, that you won't reach Mr. Hardcastle's house this night, I believe.

Hast. Unfortunate!

Tony. It's a long, dark, boggy, dirty, dangerous way. Stingo, tell the gentlemen the way to Mr. Hardcastle's (*winking upon the landlord*); Mr. Hardcastle's of Quagmire Marsh; you understand me.

Land. Master Hardcastle's? Lack-a-daisy, my masters, you're come a deadly deal wrong! When you came to the bottom of the hill, you should have crossed down Squash Lane.

Marl. Cross down Squash Lane?

Land. Then you were to keep straight forward, till you came to four roads.

Marl. Come to where four roads meet!

Tony. Ay; but you must be sure to take only one of them.

Marl. Oh, sir, you're facetious.

Tony. Then keeping to the right, you are to go sideways till you come upon Crack-skull Common: there you must look sharp for the track of the wheel, and go forward, till you come to farmer Murrain's barn. Coming to the farmer's barn, you are to turn to the right, and then to the left, and then to the right-about again, till you find out the old mill——

Marl. Zounds, man! we could as soon find out the longitude!

Hast. What's to be done, Marlow?

Marl. This house promises but a poor reception; though perhaps the landlord can accommodate us.

Land. Alack! master, we have but one spare bed in the whole house.

Tony. And, to my knowledge, that's taken up by three lodgers already (*After a pause, in which the rest seem disconcerted.*) I have hit it. Don't you think, Stingo, our landlady would accommodate the gentlemen by the fire-side, with—three chairs and a bolster?

Hast. I hate sleeping by the fire-side.

Marl. And I detest your three chairs and a bolster.

Tony. You do, do you? Then let me see—what if you go on a mile further, to the Buck's Head; the old Buck's Head on the hill, one of the best inns in the whole county?

Hast. Oh, ho! so we have escaped an adventure for this night, however.

Land. (*Apart to Tony.*) Sure, you ben't sending them to your father's as an inn, be you?

Tony. Mum, you fool you! Let *them* find that out. (*To them.*)—You have only to keep on straight forward, till you come to a large old house by the road-side. You'll see a pair of large horns over the door. That's the sign. Drive up the yard, and call stoutly about you.

Hast. Sir, we are obliged to you. The servants can't miss the way.

Tony. No, no. But I tell you, though, the landlord is rich and going to leave off business; so he wants to be thought a gentleman, saving your presence, he! he! he! He'll be for giving you his company, and ecod, if you mind him,

Tony. He-he-hem—Then, gentlemen, all I have to tell you is, that you won't reach Mr. Hardcastle's house this night, I believe.

Hastings. Unfortunate!

Tony. It's a long, dark, boggy, dirty, dangerous way. Stingo, tell the gentlemen the way to Mr. Hardcastle's.

Act I. Scene II.

Hardcastle. Well, I hope you're perfect in the table exercise I have been teaching you these three days.
Act II. Scene I.

he'll persuade you that his mother was an alderman, and his aunt a justice of peace.

Land. A troublesome old blade, to be sure; but a keeps as good wines and beds as any in the whole country.

Marl. Well, if he supplies us with these, we shall want no further connection. We are to turn to the right, did you say?

Tony. No, no; straight forward. I'll just step myself, and show you a piece of the way. *(To the landlord.)* Mum.

Land. Ah, you are a sweet, pleasant—mischievous humbug. (*Exeunt.*)

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An old-fashioned house.*

Enter HARDCASTLE, *followed by three or four awkward Servants.*

Hard. Well, I hope you're perfect in the table exercise I have been teaching you these three days. You all know your posts and your places; and can show that you have been used to good company, without ever stirring from home.

Omnes. Ay, ay.

Hard. When company comes, you are not to pop out and stare, and then run in again, like frighted rabbits in a warren.

Omnes. No, no.

Hard. You, Diggory, whom I have taken from the barn, are to make a show at the side-table; and you, Roger, whom I have advanced from the plough, are to place yourself behind *my* chair. But you're not to stand so, with your hands in your pockets. Take your hands from your pockets, Roger; and from your head, you blockhead you. See how Diggory carries his hands. They're a little too stiff, indeed, but that's no great matter.

Digg. Ay; mind how I hold them. I learned to hold my hands this way, when I was upon drill for the militia. And so being upon drill——

Hard. You must not be so talkative, Diggory. You must be all attention to the guests. You must hear us talk, and not think of talking; you must see us drink, and not think of drinking; you must see us eat, and not think of eating.

Digg. By the laws, your worship, that's parfectly unpossible. Whenever Diggory sees yeating going forward, ecod, he's always wishing for a mouthful himself.

Hard. Blockhead! is not a belly-full in the kitchen as good as a belly-full in the parlour? Stay your stomach with that reflection.

Digg. Ecod, I thank your worship, I'll make a shift to stay my stomach with a slice of cold beef in the pantry.

Hard. Diggory, you are too talkative. Then if I happen to say a good thing, or tell a good story at table, you must not all burst out a-laughing, as if you made part of the company.

Digg. Then, ecod, your worship must not tell the story of Ould Grouse in the gun-room: I can't help laughing at that—he! he! he!—for the soul of me. We have laughed at that these twenty years—ha! ha! ha!

Hard. Ha! ha! ha! The story is a good one. Well, honest Diggory, you may laugh at that—but still remember to be attentive. Suppose one of the company should call for a glass of wine, how will you behave? A glass of wine, sir, if you please. (*To* DIGGORY)—Eh, why don't you move?

Digg. Ecod, your worship, I never have courage till I see the eatables and drinkables brought upon the table, and then I'm as bauld as a lion.

Hard. What, will nobody move?

1 *Serv.* I'm not to leave this pleace.

2 *Serv.* I'm sure it's no pleace of mine.

3 *Serv.* Nor mine, for sartain.

Digg. Wauns, and I'm sure, it canna be mine.

Hard. You numsculls! and so while, like your betters, you are quarrelling for places, the guests must be starved. Oh, you dunces! I find I must begin all over again. But don't I hear a coach drive into the yard? To your

posts, you blockheads! I'll go in the meantime, and give my old friend's son a hearty reception at the gate. (*Exit* HARDCASTLE.)

Digg. By the elevens, my pleace is gone quite out of my head.

Roger. I know that my pleace is to be everywhere.

1 *Serv.* Where is mine?

2 *Serv.* My pleace is to be nowhere at all; and so I'ze go about my business. (*Exeunt* Servants, *running about as if frightened, different ways.*)

Enter Servant *with candles, showing in* MARLOW *and* HASTINGS.

Serv. Welcome, gentlemen, very welcome. This way.

Hast. After the disappointments of the day, welcome once more, Charles, to the comforts of a clean room, and a good fire. Upon my word, a very well-looking house; antique, but creditable.

Marl. The usual fate of a large mansion. Having first ruined the master by good housekeeping, it at last comes to levy contributions as an inn.

Hast. As you say, we passengers are to be taxed to pay all these fineries. I have often seen a good side-board, or a marble chimney-piece, though not actually put in the bill, inflame a reckoning confoundedly.

Marl. Travellers, George, must pay in all places. The only difference is, that in good inns you pay dearly for luxuries; in bad inns you are fleeced and starved.

Hast. You have lived very much among them. In truth, I have been often surprised, that you, who have seen so much of the world, with your natural good sense, and your many opportunities, could never yet acquire a requisite share of assurance.

Marl. The Englishman's malady. But tell me, George, where could I have learned that assurance you talk of? My life has been chiefly spent in a college, or an inn; in seclusion from that lovely part of the creation that chiefly teach men confidence. I don't know that I was ever familiarly acquainted with a single modest woman—except my mother.

Hast. In the company of women of reputation, I never saw such an idiot, such a trembler: you look, for all the world, as if you wanted an opportunity of stealing out of the room.

Marl. Why, man, that's because I *do* want to steal out of the room! I have often formed a resolution to break the ice, and rattle away at any rate. But I don't know how, a single glance from a pair of fine eyes has totally overset my resolution. An impudent fellow may counterfeit modesty; but I'll be hanged if a modest man can ever counterfeit impudence.

Hast. If you could but say half the fine things to them that I have heard you lavish upon the barmaid of an inn.

Marl. Why, George, I can't say fine things to them. They freeze, they petrify me. They may talk of a comet, or a burning mountain, or some such bagatelle: but to me, a modest woman, drest out in all her finery, is the most tremendous object of the whole creation.

Hast. Ha! ha! ha! At this rate, man, how can you ever expect to marry?

Marl. Never, unless, as among kings and princes, my bride were to be courted by proxy. If, indeed, like an Eastern bridegroom, one were to be introduced to a wife he never saw before, it might be endured. But to go through all the terrors of a formal courtship, together with the episode of aunts, grandmothers, and cousins, and at last to blurt out the broad-star question of—*Madam, will you marry me?* No, no; that's a strain much above me, I assure you.

Hast. I pity you. But how do you intend behaving to the lady you are come down to visit at the request of your father?

Marl. As I behave to all other ladies: bow very low; answer yes, or no, to all her demands. But for the rest, I don't think I shall venture to look in her face, till I see my father's again.

Hast. I am surprised that one who is so warm a friend can be so cool a lover.

Marl. To be explicit, my dear Hastings, my chief inducement down, was to be instrumental in forwarding your happiness, not my own. Miss Neville loves you; the family don't know you; as my friend you are sure of a reception, and let honour do the rest.

Hast. My dear Marlow!—But I'll suppress the emotion. Were I a wretch, meanly seeking to carry off a fortune, you should be the last man in the world I would apply to for assistance. But Miss Neville's person is all I ask; and that is mine, both from her deceased father's consent, and her own inclination.

Marl. Happy man! You have talents and art to captivate any woman. I am doomed to adore the sex, and yet to converse with the only part of it I despise. This stammer in my address, and this awkward prepossessing visage of mine, can never permit me to soar——Pshaw! this fellow here to interrupt us.

Enter HARDCASTLE.

Hard. Gentlemen, once more you are heartily welcome. Which is Mr. Marlow? Sir, you're heartily welcome. It's not my way, you see, to receive my friends with my back to the fire. I like to give them a hearty reception, in the old style, at my gate. I like to see their horses and trunks taken care of.

Marl. (*Aside.*) He has got our names from the servants already. (*To him*) We approve your caution and hospitality, sir. (*To* HASTINGS)—I have been thinking, George, of changing our travelling dresses in the morning. I am grown confoundedly ashamed of mine.

Hard. I beg, Mr. Marlow, you'll use no ceremony in this house.

Hast. I fancy, Charles, you're right: the first blow is half the battle. I intend opening the campaign with the white and gold.

Hard. Mr. Marlow—Mr. Hastings—gentlemen—pray be under no restraint in this house. This is Liberty Hall, gentlemen. You may do just as you please here.

Hardcastle. Your talking of a retreat, Mr. Marlow, puts me in mind of the Duke of Marlborough, when he went to besiege Denain. He first summoned the garrison—— *Act II. Scene I.*

Marl. Yet, George, if we open the campaign too fiercely at first, we may want ammunition before it is over. I think to reserve the embroidery to secure a retreat.

Hard. Your talking of a retreat, Mr. Marlow, puts me in mind of the Duke of Marlborough, when he went to besiege Denain. He first summoned the garrison——

Marl. Don't you think the *ventre d'or* waistcoat will do with the plain brown?

Hard. He first summoned the garrison, which might consist of about five thousand men——

Hast. I think not: brown and yellow mix but very poorly.

Hard. I say, gentlemen, as I was telling you, he summoned the garrison, which might consist of about five thousand men——

Marl. The girls like finery.

Hard. Which might consist of about five thousand men, well appointed with stores, ammunition, and other implements of war. Now, says the Duke of Marlborough to George Brooks that stood next to him—you must have heard of George Brooks—"I'll pawn my dukedom," says he, "but I'll take that garrison, without spilling a drop of blood." So——

Marl. What, my good friend, if you gave us a glass of punch in the meantime? It would help us to carry on the siege with vigour.

Hard. Punch, sir! (*Aside*)—This is the most unaccountable kind of modesty I ever met with.

Marl. Yes, sir, punch. A glass of warm punch, after our journey, will be comfortable. This is Liberty Hall, you know.

Hard. Here's a cup, sir.

Marl. (*Aside.*) So this fellow, in his Liberty Hall, will only let us have just what he pleases.

Hard. (*Taking the cup.*) I hope you'll find it to your mind. I have prepared it with my own hands, and I believe you'll own the ingredients are tolerable. Will you be so good as to pledge me, sir? Here, Mr. Marlow, here is to our better acquaintance. (*Drinks.*)

Marl. (*Aside.*) A very impudent fellow this! but he's a character, and I'll humour him a little. (*To him*)—Sir, my service to you. (*Drinks.*)

Hast. (*Aside.*) I see this fellow wants to give us his company, and forgets that he's an innkeeper, before he has learned to be a gentleman.

Marl. From the excellence of your cup, my old friend, I suppose you have a good deal of business in this part of the country. Warm work, now and then, at elections, I suppose.

Hard. No, sir, I have long given that work over. Since our betters have hit upon the expedient of electing each other, there's no business *for us that sell ale.*

Hast. So, then, you have no turn for politics, I find.

Hard. Not in the least. There was a time, indeed, I fretted myself about the mistakes of Government, like other people; but, finding myself every day grow more angry, and the Government growing no better, I left it to mend itself. Since that, I no more trouble my head about *Hyder Ally*, or *Ally Cawn*, than about *Ally Croker.*—Sir, my service to you.

Hast. So that with eating above stairs, and drinking below; with receiving your friends within, and amusing them without, you lead a good, pleasant, bustling life of it.

Hard. I do stir about a great deal, that's certain. Half the differences of the parish are adjusted in this very parlour.

Marl. (*After drinking.*) And you have an argument in your cup, old gentleman, better than any in Westminster Hall.

Hard. Ay, young gentleman, that, and a little philosophy.

Marl. (*Aside.*) Well, this is the first time I ever heard of an innkeeper's philosophy!

Hast. So then, like an experienced general, you attack them on every quarter. If you find their reason manageable, you attack it with your philosophy; if you find they have no reason, you attack them with this.—Here's your health, my philosopher. (*Drinks.*)

Hard. Good, very good, thank you; ha! ha! Your generalship puts me in mind of Prince Eugene, when he fought the Turks at the battle of Belgrade. You shall hear.

Marl. Instead of the battle of Belgrade, I think it's almost time to talk about supper. What has your philosophy got in the house for supper?

Hard. For supper, sir! (*Aside*)—Was ever such a request to a man in his own house?

Marl. Yes, sir; supper, sir: I begin to feel an appetite. I shall make sad work to-night in the larder, I promise you.

Hard. (*Aside.*) Such a brazen dog sure never my eyes beheld. (*To him*) —Why, really, sir, as for supper, I can't well tell. My Dorothy and the cook-maid settle these things between them. I leave these kind of things entirely to them.

Marl. You do, do you?

Hard. Entirely. By-the-bye, I believe they are in actual consultation, upon what's for supper, this moment in the kitchen.

Marl. Then I beg they'll admit *me* as one of their privy council. It's a way I have got. When I travel, I always choose to regulate my own supper. Let the cook be called. No offence, I hope, sir.

Hard. Oh, no, sir, none in the least; yet I don't know how, our Bridget, the cook-maid, is not very communicative upon these occasions. Should we send for her, she might scold us all out of the house.

Hast. Let's see the list of the larder, then. I ask it as a favour. I always match my appetite to my bill of fare.

Marl. (*To* HARDCASTLE, *who looks at them with surprise.*) Sir, he's very right, and it's my way too.

Hard. Sir, you have a right to command here. Here, Roger, bring us the bill of fare for to-night's supper. I believe it's drawn out. Your manner, Mr. Hastings, puts me in mind of my uncle, Colonel Wallop. It was a saying of his, that no man was sure of his supper till he had eaten it.

Hast. (*Aside.*) All upon the high ropes! His uncle a colonel! we shall soon hear of his mother being a justice of the peace. But let's hear the bill of fare.

Marl. (*Perusing.*) What's here? For the first course; for the second course; for the dessert. Sir, do you think we have brought down the whole joiners' company, or the corporation of Bedford, to eat up such a supper? Two or three little things, clean and comfortable, will do.

Hast. But let's hear it.

Marl. (*Reading.*) For the first course at the top, a pig and prunesauce.

Hast. I hate your pig, I say.

Marl. And I hate your prunesauce, say I.

Hard. And yet, gentlemen, to men that are hungry, pig, with prunesauce, is very good eating.

Marl. At the bottom, a calf's tongue and brains.

Hast. Let your brains be knocked out, my good sir; I don't like them.

Marl. Or you may clap them on a plate by themselves. I do.

Hard. (*Aside.*) Their impudence confounds me. (*To them*)—Gentlemen,

you are my guests, make what alterations you please. Is there anything else you wish to retrench or alter, gentlemen?

Marl. Item, a pork pie, a boiled rabbit and sausages, a florentine, a shaking pudding, and a dish of tiff—taff—taffety cream!

Hast. Confound your made dishes! I shall be as much at a loss in this house as at a green and yellow dinner at the French ambassador's table. I'm for plain eating.

Hard. I m sorry, gentlemen, that I have nothing you like; but if there be anything you have a particular fancy to——

Marl. Why, sir, your bill of fare is so exquisite, that any one part of it is full as good as another. Send us what you please. So much for supper: and now to see that our beds are aired and properly taken care of.

Hard. I entreat you'll leave all that to me. You shall not stir a step.

Marl. Leave that to you? I protest, sir, you must excuse me; I always look to these things myself.

Hard. I must insist, sir, you'll make yourself easy on that head.

Marl. You see I'm resolved on it. (*Aside*)—A very troublesome fellow this, as ever I met with.

Hard. Well, sir, I'm resolved at least to attend you. (*Aside*)—This may be modern modesty, but I never saw anything look so like old-fashioned impudence. (*Exeunt* MARL. *and* HARD.)

HASTINGS, *solus.*

Hast. So I find, this fellow's civilities begin to grow troublesome. But who can be angry at these assiduities, which are meant to please him? Ha! what do I see? Miss Neville, by all that's happy!

Enter MISS NEVILLE.

Miss Nev. My dear Hastings! To what unexpected good fortune, to what accident, am I to ascribe this happy meeting?

Hast. Rather, let me ask the same question, as I could never have hoped to meet my dear Constance at an inn.

Miss Nev. An inn! sure you mistake! my aunt, my guardian, lives here. What could induce you to think this house an inn?

Hast. My friend, Mr. Marlow, with whom I came down, and I, have been sent here as to an inn, I assure you. A young fellow, whom we accidentally met at a house hard by, directed us hither.

Miss Nev. Certainly it must be one of my hopeful cousin's tricks, of whom you have heard me talk so often, ha! ha! ha! ha!

Hast. He whom your aunt intends for you? He of whom I have such just apprehensions?

Miss Nev. You have nothing to fear from him, I assure you. You'd adore him, if you knew how heartily he despises me. My aunt knows it too, and has undertaken to court me for him; and actually begins to think she has made a conquest.

Miss Hardcastle. I'm glad of your safe arrival, sir. I'm told you had some accidents by the way.

Marlow. Only a few, madam. Yes, we had some. Yes, madam, a good many accidents; but should be sorry—madam—or rather glad of any accidents . . . .

Hastings. Cicero never spoke better.

Act II. Scene I.

Hast. Thou dear dissembler! You must know, my Constance, I have just seized this happy opportunity of my friend's visit here, to get admittance into the family. The horses that carried us down are now fatigued with their journey; but they'll soon be refreshed; and then, if my dearest girl will trust in her faithful Hastings, we shall soon be landed in France; where, even among slaves, the laws of marriage are respected.

Miss Nev. I have often told you, that though ready to obey you, I yet should leave my little fortune behind with reluctance. The greatest part of it was left me by my uncle, the India director, and chiefly consists in jewels. I have been for some time persuading my aunt to let me wear them. I fancy I am very near succeeding. The instant they are put into my possession, you shall find me ready to make them and myself yours.

Hast. Perish the baubles! Your person is all I desire. In the meantime, my friend Marlow must not be let into his mistake; I know the strange reserve of his temper is such, that if abruptly informed of it, he would instantly quit the house, before our plan was ripe for execution.

Miss Nev. But how shall we keep him in the deception? Miss Hardcastle is just returned from walking; what if we still continue to deceive him? This, this way. (*They confer.*)

Enter MARLOW.

Marl. The assiduities of these good people tease me beyond bearing. My host seems to think it ill manners to leave me alone, and so he claps not only himself, but his old-fashioned wife on my back. They talk of coming to sup with us too; and then, I suppose, we are to run the gauntlet through all the rest of the family. What have we got here?

Hast. My dear Charles! Let me congratulate you! The most fortunate accident! Who do you think is just alighted?

Marl. Cannot guess.

Hast. Our mistresses, boy, Miss Hardcastle and Miss Neville. Give me leave to introduce Miss Constance Neville to your acquaintance. Happening to dine in the neighbourhood, they called, on their return, to take fresh horses here. Miss Hardcastle has just stept into the next room, and will be back in an instant. Wasn't it lucky, eh?

Marl. (Aside.) I have just been mortified enough of all conscience, and here comes something to complete my embarrassment.

Hast. Well, but wasn't it the most fortunate thing in the world?

Marl. Oh! yes. Very fortunate—a most joyful encounter. But our dresses, George, you know, are in disorder. What if we should postpone the happiness till to-morrow? To-morrow, at her own house; it will be every bit as convenient, and rather more respectful. To-morrow let it be.

(*Offering to go*)

Miss Nev. By no means, sir. Your ceremony will displease her. The disorder of your dress will show the ardour of your impatience; besides, she knows you are in the house, and will permit you to see her.

Marl. Oh! how shall I support it? Hem! hem! Hastings, you must not go. You are to assist me, you know. I shall be confoundedly ridiculous. Yet hang it! I'll take courage. Hem!

Hast. Pshaw, man! it's but the first plunge, and all's over. She's but a woman, you know.

Marl. And of all women, she that I dread most to encounter.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE, *as returning from walking, in a bonnet, &c.*

Hast. (Introducing him.) Miss Hardcastle—Mr. Marlow. I'm proud of bringing two persons of such merit together, that only want to know, to esteem each other.

Miss Hard. (Aside.) Now, for meeting my modest gentleman with a demure face, and quite in his own manner. *(After a pause, in which he appears very uneasy and disconcerted.)* I'm glad of your safe arrival, sir. I'm told you had some accidents by the way.

Marl. Only a few, madam. Yes, we had some. Yes, madam, a good many accidents; but should be sorry—madam—or rather glad of any accidents—that are so agreeably concluded. Hem!

Hast. (To him.) You never spoke better in your whole life. Keep it up, and I'll ensure you the victory.

Miss Hard. I'm afraid you flatter, sir. You, that have seen so much of the finest company, can find little entertainment in an obscure corner of the country.

Marl. (Gathering courage.) I have lived, indeed, in the world, madam; but I have kept very little company. I have been but an observer upon life, madam, while others were enjoying it.

Miss Nev. But that, I am told, is the way to enjoy it at last.

Hast. (To him.) Cicero never spoke better. Once more, and you are confirmed in assurance for ever.

Marl. (To him.) Hem! Stand by me, then; and when I'm down, throw in a word or two, to set me up again.

Miss Hard. An observer, like you, upon life, were, I fear, disagreeably employed, since you must have had much more to censure than to approve.

Marl. Pardon me, madam. I was always willing to be amused. The folly of most people is rather an object of mirth than uneasiness.

Hast. (To him.) Bravo, bravo. Never spoke so well in your whole life. Well! (*To* MISS HARD.) Miss Hardcastle, I see that you and Mr. Marlow are going to be very good company. I believe our being here will but embarrass the interview.

Marl. Not in the least, Mr. Hastings. We like your company of all things. *(To him.)* Zounds! George, sure you won't go—how can you leave us?

Hast. Our presence will but spoil conversation, so we'll retire to the next room. *(To him.)* You don't consider, man, that we are to manage a little tête-à tête of our own. (*Exeunt.*)

Miss Hard. (*After a pause.*) But you have not been wholly an observer, I

presume, sir: the ladies, I should hope, have employed some part of your addresses.

Marl. (*Relapsing into timidity.*) Pardon me, madam, I—I—I as yet have studied—only—to—deserve them.

Miss Hard. And that, some say, is the very worst way to obtain them.

Marl. Perhaps so, madam. But I love to converse only with the more grave and sensible part of the sex. But I'm afraid I grow tiresome.

Miss Hard. Not at all, sir; there is nothing I like so much as grave conversation myself; I could hear it for ever. Indeed, I have often been surprised how a man of *sentiment* could ever admire those light, airy pleasures, where nothing reaches the heart.

Marl. It's—a disease—of the mind, madam. In the variety of tastes there must be some, who, wanting a relish—for—um-a-um.

Miss Hard. I understand you, sir. There must be some, who, wanting a relish for refined pleasures, pretend to despise what they are incapable of tasting.

Marl. My meaning, madam, but infinitely better expressed. And I can't help observing—a—

Miss Hard. (*Aside.*) Who could ever suppose this fellow impudent upon some occasions? (*To him.*) You were going to observe, sir——

Marl. I was observing, madam—I protest, madam, I forget what I was going to observe.

Miss Hard. (*Aside.*) I vow, and so do I. (*To him.*) You were observing, sir, that in this age of hypocrisy—something about hypocrisy, sir.

Marl. Yes, madam; in this age of hypocrisy there are few who, upon strict inquiry, do not—a—a—a—

Miss Hard. I understand you perfectly, sir.

Marl. (*Aside.*) Indeed! and that's more than I do myself.

Miss Hard. You mean that, in this hypocritical age, there are few that do not condemn in public what they practise in private, and think they pay every debt to virtue when they praise it.

Marl. True, madam; those who have most virtue in their mouths have least of it in their bosoms. But I'm sure I tire you, madam.

Miss Hard. Not in the least, sir; there's something so agreeable, and spirited, in your manner; such life and force—pray, sir, go on.

Marl. Yes, madam; I was saying—that there are some occasions—when a total want of courage, madam, destroys all the—and puts us—upon a—a—a—

Miss Hard. I agree with you entirely; a want of courage upon some occasions, assumes the appearance of ignorance, and betrays us when we most want to excel. I beg you'll proceed.

Marl. Yes, madam; morally speaking, madam—But I see Miss Neville expecting us in the next room. I would not intrude for the world.

Miss Hard. I protest, sir, I never was more agreeably entertained in all my life. Pray go on.

Tony. What do you follow me for, Cousin Con? I wonder you're not ashamed, to be so very engaging.

Miss Neville. I hope, cousin, one may speak to one's own relations, and not be to blame?

Tony. Ay, but I know what sort of a relation you want to make me, though; but it won't do.

Act II. Scene I.

Marl. Yes, madam; I was—But she beckons us to join her. Madam, shall I do myself the honour to attend you?

Miss Hard. Well then, I'll follow.

Marl. (*Aside.*) This pretty smooth dialogue has done for me. (*Exit.*

MISS HARDCASTLE, *sola.*

Miss Hard. Ha! ha! ha! Was there ever such a sober, sentimental interview? I'm certain he scarce looked in my face the whole time. Yet the fellow, but for his unaccountable bashfulness, is pretty well too. He has good sense; but then, so buried in his fears, that it fatigues one more than ignorance. If I could teach him a little confidence, it would be doing somebody, that I know of, a piece of service. But who is that somebody?—that is a question I can scarce answer. (*Exit.*)

Enter TONY *and* MISS NEVILLE, *followed by* MRS. HARDCASTLE *and* HASTINGS.

Tony. What do you follow me for, Cousin Con? I wonder you're not ashamed, to be so very engaging.

Miss Nev. I hope, cousin, one may speak to one's own relations, and not be to blame?

Tony. Ay, but I know what sort of a relation you want to make me, though; but it won't do. I tell you, Cousin Con, it won't do, so I beg you'll keep your distance; I want no nearer relationship.

(*She follows, coquetting him to the back-scene.*)

Mrs. Hard. Well! I vow, Mr. Hastings, you are very entertaining. There's nothing in the world I love to talk of so much as London, and the fashions, though I was never there myself.

Hast. Never there! You amaze me! From your air and manner, I concluded you had been bred all your life either at Ranelagh, St. James's, or Tower Wharf.

Mrs. Hard. Oh! sir, you're only pleased to say so. We country persons can have no manner at all. I'm in love with the town, and that serves to raise me above some of our neighbouring rustics; but who can have a manner, that has never seen the Pantheon, the Grotto Gardens, the Borough, and such places where the nobility chiefly resort? All I can do is to enjoy London at second-hand. I take care to know every tête-à tête from the Scandalous Magazine, and have all the fashions, as they come out, in a letter from the two Miss Rickets of Crooked-lane. Pray, how do you like this head, Mr. Hastings?

Hast. Extremely elegant and *dégagée*, upon my word, madam. Your friseur is a Frenchman, I suppose?

Mrs. Hard. I protest I dressed it myself from a print in the Ladies' Memorandum Book for the last year.

Hast. Indeed! such a head in a side-box, at the play-house, would draw as many gazers as my Lady Mayoress at a city ball.

Mrs. Hard. I vow, since inoculation began there is no such thing to be seen as a plain woman; so one must dress a little particular, or one may escape in the crowd.

Hast. But that can never be your case, madam, in any dress. (*Bowing.*)

Mrs. Hard. Yet what signifies *my* dressing when I have such a piece of antiquity by my side as Mr. Hardcastle? All I can say will not argue down a single button from his clothes. I have often wanted him to throw off his great flaxen wig, and where he was bald, to plaster it over, like my Lord Pately, with powder.

Hast. You are right, madam; for as among the ladies there are none ugly, so among the men there are none old.

Mrs. Hard. But what do you think his answer was? Why, with his usual Gothic vivacity, he said, I only wanted him to throw off his wig, to convert it into a tête for my own wearing.

Hast. Intolerable! At your age you may wear what you please, and it must become you.

Mrs. Hard. Pray, Mr. Hastings, what do you take to be the most fashionable age about town?

Hast. Some time ago, forty was all the mode; but I'm told the ladies intend to bring up fifty for the ensuing winter.

Mrs. Hard. Seriously! then I shall be too young for the fashion.

Hast. No lady begins now to put on jewels till she's past forty. For instance, Miss there, in a polite circle, would be considered as a child, as a mere maker of samplers.

Mrs. Hard. And yet Mrs. Niece thinks herself as much a woman, and is as fond of jewels, as the oldest of us all.

Hast. Your niece, is she? and that young gentleman a brother of yours, I should presume?

Mrs. Hard. My son, sir. They are contracted to each other. Observe their little sports. They fall in and out ten times a day, as if they were man and wife already. (*To them.*) Well, Tony, child, what soft things are you saying to your cousin Constance this evening?

Tony. I have been saying no soft things; but that it's very hard to be followed about so. Ecod, I've not a place in the house now that's left to myself, but the stable.

Mrs. Hard. Never mind him, Con, my dear. He's in another story behind your back.

Miss Nev. There's something generous in my cousin's manner. He falls out before faces to be forgiven in private.

Tony. That's a confounded—crack.

Mrs. Hard. Ah! he's a sly one. Don't you think they're like each other about the mouth, Mr. Hastings? The Blenkinsop mouth to a T. They're of a size, too. Back to back, my pretties, that Mr. Hastings may see you. Come, Tony.

Tony. You had as good not make me, I tell you. (*Measuring.*)

Miss Nev. Oh! he has almost cracked my head.

Mrs. Hard. Oh, the monster! For shame, Tony. You a man, and behave so!

Tony. If I'm a man, let me have my fortin. Ecod, I'll not be made a fool of no longer.

Mrs. Hard. Is this, ungrateful boy, all that I'm to get for the pains I have taken in your education? I that have rocked you in your cradle, and fed that pretty mouth with a spoon? Did not I work that waistcoat to make you genteel? Did not I prescribe for you every day, and weep while the receipt was operating?

Tony. Ecod, you had reason to weep, for you have been dosing me ever since I was born. I have gone through every receipt in the *Complete Huswife* ten times over; and you have thoughts of coursing me through *Quincy* next spring. But, ecod, I tell you, I'll not be made a fool of no longer.

Mrs. Hard. Wasn't it all for your good, viper? Wasn't it all for your good?

Tony. I wish you'd let me and my good alone, then. Snubbing this way, when I'm in spirits. If I'm to have any good, let it come of itself; not to keep dinging it, dinging it into one so.

Mrs. Hard. That's false; I never see you when you are in spirits. No Tony, you then go to the alehouse, or kennel. I'm never to be delighted with your agreeable wild notes, unfeeling monster!

Tony. Ecod, mamma, your own notes are the wildest of the two.

Mrs. Hard. Was ever the like! But I see he wants to break my heart, I see he does.

Hast. Dear madam, permit me to lecture the young gentleman a little. I'm certain I can persuade him to his duty.

Mrs. Hard. Well! I must retire. Come, Constance, my love. You see, Mr. Hastings, the wretchedness of my situation. Was ever poor woman so plagued with a dear, sweet, pretty, provoking, undutiful boy?

(*Exeunt* MRS. HARD. *and* MISS NEVILLE.)

HASTINGS. TONY

Tony. (*Singing.*)

There was a young man riding by,
And fain would have his will.
Rang do didlo dee.

Don't mind her. Let her cry. It's the comfort of her heart. I have seen her and sister cry over a book for an hour together; and they said they liked the book the better the more it made them cry.

Hast. Then you're no friend to the ladies, I find, my pretty young gentleman.

Tony. That's as I find 'um.

Mrs. Hardcastle. Back to back, my pretties, that Mr. Hastings may see you Come, Tony.
Tony. You had as good not make me. I tell you. (*Measuring.*)
Miss Neville. Oh! he has almost cracked my head. *Act II. Scene I.*

Hast. Not to her of your mother's choosing, I dare answer: and yet she appears to me a pretty, well-tempered girl.

Tony. That's because you don't know her as well as I. Ecod, I know every inch about her and there's not a more bitter, cantankerous toad in all Christendom.

Hast. (*Aside.*) Pretty encouragement this for a lover!

Tony. I have seen her since the height of that. She has as many tricks as a hare in a thicket, or a colt the first day's breaking.

Hast. To me she appears sensible and silent.

Tony. Ay, before company. But when she's with her playmates, she's as loud as a hog in a gate.

Hast. But there is a meek modesty about her that charms me.

Tony. Yes; but curb her never so little, she kicks up, and you're flung in a ditch.

Hast. Well, but you must allow her a little beauty. Yes, you must allow her some beauty.

Tony. Bandbox! She's all a made up thing, mun. Ah! could you but see Bet Bouncer, of these parts, you might then talk of beauty. Ecod, she has

two eyes as black as sloes, and cheeks as broad and red as a pulpit cushion. She'd make two of she.

Hast. Well, what say you to a friend that would take this bitter bargain off your hands?

Tony. Anon!

Hast. Would you thank him that would take Miss Neville, and leave you to happiness and your dear Betsy?

Tony. Ay; but where is there such a friend? for who would take her?

Hast. I am he. If you but assist me, I'll engage to whip her off to France, and you shall never hear more of her.

Tony. Assist you! Ecod, I will, to the last drop of my blood. I'll clap a pair of horses to your chaise that shall trundle you off in a twinkling; and may be, get you a part of her fortin beside, in jewels, that you little dream of.

Hast. My dear 'squire, this looks like a lad of spirit.

Tony. Come along then, and you shall see more of my spirit before you have done with me. (*Singing.*)

We are the boys
That fears no noise
Where the thundering cannons roar.

(*Exeunt.*)

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Enter* HARDCASTLE, *solus.*

Hard. What could my old friend Sir Charles mean, by recommending his son as the modestest young man in town? To me he appears the most impudent piece of brass that ever spoke with a tongue. He has taken possession of the easy-chair by the fireside already. He took off his boots in the parlour, and desired me to see them taken care of. I'm desirous to know how his impudence affects my daughter. She will certainly be shocked at it.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE, *plainly dressed.*

Hard. Well, my Kate, I see you have changed your dress, as I bid you; and yet, I believe, there was no great occasion.

Miss Hard. I find such a pleasure, sir, in obeying your commands, that I take care to obey them without ever debating their propriety.

Hard. And yet, Kate, I sometimes give you some cause, particularly when I recommended my *modest* gentleman to you as a lover to-day.

Miss Hard. You taught me to expect something extraordinary, and I find the original exceeds the description.

Hard. I was never so surprised in my life! He has quite confounded all my faculties!

Miss Hard. I never saw anything like it: and a man of the world, too!

Hard. Ay, he learned it all abroad. What a fool was I to think a young man could learn modesty by travelling! He might as soon learn wit at a masquerade.

Miss Hard. It seems all natural to him.

Hard. A good deal assisted by bad company, and a French dancing-master.

Miss Hard. Sure you mistake, papa! A French dancing-master could never have taught him that timid look—that awkward address—that bashful manner—

Hard. Whose look? whose manner, child?

Miss Hard. Mr. Marlow's: his *mauvaise honte*, his timidity, struck me at the first sight.

Hard. Then your first sight deceived you; for I think him one of the most brazen first-sights that ever astonished my senses.

Miss Hard. Sure, sir, you rally! I never saw any one so modest.

Hard. And can you be serious? I never saw such a bouncing, swaggering puppy since I was born! Bully Dawson was but a fool to him.

Miss Hard. Surprising! He met me with a respectful bow, a stammering voice, and a look fixed on the ground.

Hard. He met me with a loud voice, a lordly air, and a familiarity that made my blood freeze again.

Miss Hard. He treated me with diffidence and respect; censured the manners of the age; admired the prudence of girls that never laughed; tired me with apologies for being tiresome; then left the room with a bow, and "Madam, I would not for the world detain you."

Hard. He spoke to me as if he knew me all his life before; asked twenty questions, and never waited for an answer; interrupted my best remarks with some silly pun; and when I was in my best story of the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene, he asked if I had not a good hand at making punch. Yes, Kate, he asked your father if he was a maker of punch!

Miss Hard. One of us must certainly be mistaken.

Hard. If he be what he has shown himself, I'm determined he shall never have my consent.

Miss Hard. And if he be the sullen thing I take him, he shall never have mine.

Hard. In one thing then we are agreed—to reject him.

Miss Hard. Yes. But upon conditions. For if you should find him less impudent, and I more presuming; if you find him more respectful, and I more importunate—I don't know—the fellow is well enough for a man. Certainly, we don't meet many such at a horse-race in the country.

Hard. If we should find him so—but that's impossible. The first appearance has done my business. I'm seldom deceived in that.

Miss Hardcastle. He treated me with diffidence and respect: censured the manners of the age: admired the prudence of girls that never laughed tired me with apologies for being tiresome, then left the room with a bow, and "Madam, I would not for the world detain you." *Act III. Scene 1.*

Miss Hard. And yet there may be many good qualities under that first appearance.

Hard. Ay, when a girl finds a fellow's outside to her taste, she then sets about guessing the rest of his furniture. With her a smooth face stands for good sense, and a genteel figure for every virtue.

Miss Hard. I hope, sir, a conversation begun with a compliment to my good sense, won't end with a sneer at my understanding.

Hard. Pardon me, Kate. But if young Mr. Brazen can find the art of reconciling contradictions, he may please us both, perhaps.

Miss Hard. And as one of us must be mistaken, what if we go to make further discoveries?

Hard. But depend on't, I'm in the right.

Miss Hard. And depend on't, I'm not much in the wrong. (*Exeunt.*)

Enter TONY *running in with a casket.*

Tony. Ecod, I have got them! Here they are. My cousin Con's necklaces, bobs, and all. My mother shan't cheat the poor souls out of their fortin, neither. Oh! my genus, is that you?

Enter HASTINGS.

Hast. My dear friend, how have you managed with your mother? I hope you have amused her with pretending love for your cousin; and that you are willing to be reconciled at last. Our horses will be refreshed in a short time, and we shall soon be ready to set off.

Tony. And here's something to bear your charges by the way—(*giving the casket*)—your sweetheart's jewels. Keep them; and hang those, I say, that would rob you of one of them.

Hast. But how have you procured them from your mother?

Tony. Ask me no questions, and I'll tell you no fibs. I procured them by the rule of thumb. If I had not a key to every drawer in mother's bureau, how could I go to the alehouse so often as I do? An honest man may rob of himself his own at any time.

Hast. Thousands do it every day. But to be plain with you, Miss Neville is endeavouring to procure them from her aunt this very instant. If she succeeds, it will be the most delicate way at least of obtaining them.

Tony. Well, keep them, till you know how it will be. I know how it will be, well enough; she'd as soon part with the only sound tooth in her head.

Hast. But I dread the effects of her resentment, when she finds she has lost them.

Tony. Never you mind her resentment, leave *me* to manage that. I don't value her resentment the bounce of a cracker. Zounds! here they are. Morrice! Prance! (*Exit* HASTINGS.)

TONY, MRS. HARDCASTLE, MISS NEVILLE.

Mrs. Hard. Indeed, Constance, you amaze me. Such a girl as you want jewels! It will be time enough for jewels, my dear, twenty years hence; when your beauty begins to want repairs.

Miss Nev. But what will repair beauty at forty, will certainly improve it at twenty, madam.

Mrs. Hard. Yours, my dear, can admit of none. That natural blush is beyond a thousand ornaments. Besides, child, jewels are quite out at present. Don't you see half the ladies of our acquaintance, my Lady Kill-Daylight, and Mrs. Crump, and the rest of them, carry their jewels to town, and bring nothing but paste and marcasites back?

Miss Nev. But who knows, madam, but somebody that shall be nameless would like me best with all my little finery about me?

Mrs. Hard. Consult your glass, my dear, and then see if, with such a pair of eyes, you want any better sparklers. What do you think, Tony, my dear? does your cousin Con want any jewels, in your eyes, to set off her beauty?

Tony. That's as thereafter may be.

Miss Nev. My dear aunt, if you knew how it would oblige me.

Mrs. Hard. A parcel of old-fashioned rose and table-cut things. They would make you look like the court of King Solomon at a puppet-show. Besides,

I believe I can't readily come at them. They may be missing, for aught I know to the contrary.

Tony. (*Apart to* MRS. HARDCASTLE.) Then why don't you tell her so at once, as she's so longing for them? Tell her they're lost. It's the only way to quiet her. Say they're lost, and call me to bear witness.

Mrs. Hard. (*Apart to* TONY.) You know, my dear, I'm only keeping them for you. So, if I say they're gone, you'll bear me witness, will you? He! he! he!

Tony. Never fear me. Ecod, I'll say I saw them taken out with my own eyes.

Miss Nev. I desire them but for a day, madam. Just to be permitted to show them as relics, and then they may be locked up again.

Mrs. Hard. To be plain with you, my dear Constance, if I could find them, you should have them. They're missing, I assure you. Lost, for aught I know; but we must have patience, wherever they are.

Miss Nev. I'll not believe it; this is but a shallow pretence to deny me. I know they're too valuable to be so slightly kept, and as you are to answer for the loss——

Mrs. Hard. Don't be alarmed, Constance; if they be lost, I must restore an equivalent. But my son knows they are missing, and not to be found.

Tony. That I can bear witness to. They are missing, and not to be found, I'll take my oath on't.

Mrs. Hard. You must learn resignation, my dear; for though we lose our fortune, yet we should not lose our patience. See me, how calm I am.

Miss Nev. Ay, people are generally calm at the misfortunes of others.

Mrs. Hard. Now, I wonder a girl of your good sense should waste a thought upon such trumpery. We shall soon find them; and, in the meantime, you shall make use of my garnets, till your jewels be found.

Miss Nev. I detest garnets!

Mrs. Hard. The most becoming things in the world, to set off a clear complexion. You have often seen how well they look upon me. You *shall* have them. (*Exit.*)

Miss Nev. I dislike them of all things. (*To* TONY.) You shan't stir. Was ever anything so provoking? to mislay my own jewels, and force me to wear her trumpery!

Tony. Don't be a fool! If she gives you the garnets, take what you can get. The jewels are your own already. I have stolen them out of her bureau, and she does not know it. Fly to your spark, he'll tell you more of the matter. Leave me to manage her.

Miss Nev. My dear cousin!

Tony. Vanish! She's here, and has missed them already. (*Exit* MISS NEVILLE.) Zounds! how she fidgets, and spits about like a Catharine-wheel!

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE.

Mrs. Hard. Confusion! thieves! robbers! We are cheated, plundered, broken open, undone!

Tony. What's the matter? what's the matter, mamma? I hope nothing has happened to any of the good family!

Mrs. Hard. We are robbed! My bureau has been broke open, the jewels taken out, and I'm undone.

Tony. Oh! is that all? Ha! ha! ha! By the laws, I never saw it better acted in my life. Ecod, I thought you was ruined in earnest; ha! ha! ha!.

Mrs. Hard. Why, boy, I *am* ruined in earnest. My bureau has been broke open, and all taken away.

Tony. Stick to that; ha! ha! ha! stick to that; I'll bear witness, you know; call me to bear witness.

Mrs. Hard. I tell you, Tony, by all that's precious, the jewels are gone, and I shall be ruined for ever.

Tony. Sure, I know they're gone, and I am to say so.

Mrs. Hard. My dearest Tony, but hear me. They're gone, I say.

Tony. By the laws, mamma, you make me for to laugh; ha! ha! I know who took them well enough; ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. Hard. Was there ever such a blockhead, that can't tell the difference between jest and earnest? I tell you I'm not in jest, booby!

Tony. That's right, that's right. You must be in a bitter passion, and then nobody will suspect either of us. I'll bear witness that they are gone.

Mrs. Hard. Was there ever such a cross-grained brute, that won't hear me! Can you bear witness that you're no better than a fool? Was ever poor woman so beset with fools on one hand, and thieves on the other?

Tony. I can bear witness to that.

Mrs. Hard. Bear witness again, you blockhead, you; and I'll turn you out of the room directly. My poor niece! what will become of *her?* Do you laugh, you unfeeling brute, as if you enjoyed my distress?

Tony. I can bear witness to that.

Mrs. Hard. Do you insult me, monster? I'll teach you to vex your mother, I will.

Tony. I can bear witness to that. (*He runs off, she follows him.*)

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE *and* Maid.

Miss Hard. What an unaccountable creature is that brother of mine, to send them to the house as an inn; ha! ha! I don't wonder at his impudence.

Maid. But what is more, madam, the young gentleman, as you passed by in your present dress, asked me if you were the barmaid? He mistook you for the barmaid, madam.

Miss Hard. Did he? Then, as I live, I'm resolved to keep up the delusion. Tell me, Pimple, how do you like my present dress? Don't you think I look something like Cherry in the "Beaux' Stratagem?"

Maid. It's the dress, madam, that every lady wears in the country, but when she visits or receives company.

Miss Hard. And are you sure he does not remember my face or person?

Mrs. Hardcastle. Don't be alarmed, Constance; if they be lost, I must restore an equivalent. But my son knows they are missing, and not to be found.

Tony. That I can bear witness to. They are missing, and not to be found, I'll take my oath on't.

Act III. Scene I.

Maid. Certain of it.

Miss Hard. I vow, I thought so; for though we spoke for some time together, yet his fears were such, that he never once looked up during the interview. Indeed, if he had, my bonnet would have kept him from seeing me.

Maid. But what do you hope from keeping him in his mistake?

Miss Hard. In the first place, I shall be *seen*, and that is no small advantage to a girl who brings her face to market. Then I shall, perhaps, make an acquaintance, and that's no small victory gained over one who never addresses any but the wildest of her sex. But my chief aim is to take my gentleman off his guard, and, like an invisible champion of romance, examine the giant's force before I offer to combat.

Maid. But are you sure you can act your part, and disguise your voice, so that he may mistake that, as he has already mistaken your person?

Miss Hard. Never fear me. I think I have got the true bar cant.—Did your honour call?—Attend the Lion there.—Pipes and tobacco for the Angel.—The Lamb has been outrageous this half-hour.

Maid. It will do, madam. But he's here. (*Exit* Maid.)

Enter MARLOW.

Marl. What a bawling in every part of the house! I have scarce a moment's repose. If I go to the best room, there I find my host and his story. If I fly to the gallery, there we have my hostess, with her curtsey down to the ground. I have at last got a moment to myself, and now for recollection.

(*Walks and muses.*)

Miss Hard. Did you call, sir? did your honour call?

Marl. (*Musing.*) As for Miss Hardcastle, she's too grave and sentimental for me.

Miss Hard. Did your honour call?

(*She still places herself before him, he turning away.*)

Marl. No, child. (*Musing.*) Besides, from the glimpse I had of her, I think she squints.

Miss Hard. I'm sure, sir, I heard the bell ring.

Marl. No, no. (*Musing.*) I have pleased my father, however, by coming down, and I'll to-morrow please myself by returning.

(*Taking out his tablets, and perusing.*)

Miss Hard. Perhaps the other gentleman called, sir.

Marl. I tell you, no.

Miss Hard. I should be glad to know, sir. We have such a parcel of servants.

Marl. No, no, I tell you. (*Looks full in her face.*) Yes, child, I think I did call. I wanted—I wanted—I vow, child, you are vastly handsome.

Miss Hard. Oh! la, sir, you'll make one ashamed.

Marl. Never saw a more sprightly, malicious eye. Yes, yes, my dear, I did call. Have you got any of your—a—what d'ye call it, in the house?

Miss Hard. No, sir, we have been out of that these ten days.

Marl. One may call in this house, I find, to very little purpose. Suppose I should call for a taste, just by way of trial, of the nectar of your lips; perhaps I might be disappointed in that, too.

Miss Hard. Nectar! nectar! that's a liquor there's no call for in these parts. French, I suppose. We keep no French wines here, sir.

Marl. Of true English growth, I assure you.

Miss Hard. Then it's odd I should not know it. We brew all sorts of wines in this house, and I have lived here these eighteen years.

Marl. Eighteen years? Why, one would think, child, you kept the bar before you were born. How old are you?

Miss Hard. Oh, sir, I must not tell my age! They say women and music should never be dated.

Marl. To guess at this distance, you can't be much above forty. (*Approaching.*) Yet nearer, I don't think so much. (*Approaching.*) By coming close to some women, they look younger still; but when we come very close indeed—— (*Attempting to kiss her.*)

Miss Hard. Pray, sir, keep your distance. One would think you wanted to know one's age as they do horses, by mark of mouth.

Marl. I protest, child, you use me extremely ill. If you keep me at this distance, how is it possible you and I can be ever acquainted?

Miss Hard. And who wants to be acquainted with you? I want no such acquaintance, not I. I'm sure you did not treat Miss Hardcastle, that was here a while ago, in this obstropalous manner. I'll warrant me, before her you looked dashed, and kept bowing to the ground, and talked, for all the world, as if you was before a justice of peace.

Marl. (*Aside.*) Egad! she has hit it, sure enough. (*To her*)—In awe of her, child? Ha! ha! ha! A mere awkward, squinting thing; no, no. I find you don't know me. I laughed, and rallied her a little; but I was unwilling to be too severe. No, I could not be too severe.

Miss Hard. Oh! then, sir, you are a favourite, I find, among the ladies.

Marl. Yes, my dear, a great favourite. And yet, hang me, I don't see what they find in me to follow. At the ladies' club in town, I'm called their agreeable Rattle. Rattle, child, is not my real name, but one I'm known by. My name is Solomons. Mr. Solomons, my dear, at your service (*Offering to salute her.*)

Miss Hard. Hold, sir; you were introducing me to your club, not to yourself. And you're so great a favourite there, you say?

Marl. Yes, my dear; there's Mrs. Mantrap, Lady Betty Blackleg, the Countess of Sligo, Mrs. Langhorns, old Miss Biddy Buckskin, and your humble servant, keep up the spirit of the place.

Miss Hard. Then it's a very merry place, I suppose.

Marl. Yes, as merry as cards, suppers, wine, and old women can make us.

Miss Hard. And their agreeable Rattle; ha! ha! ha!

Marl. (*Aside.*) Indeed! I don't quite like this chit. She looks knowing, methinks. (*To her*)—You laugh, child!

Miss Hard. I can't but laugh to think what time they all have for minding their work or their family.

Marl. (*Aside.*) All's well, she don't laugh at me. (*To her*)—Do *you* ever work, child?

Miss Hard. Ay, sure. There's not a screen or a quilt in the whole house but what can bear witness to that.

Marl. Odso! Then you must show me your embroidery. I embroider, and draw patterns myself a little. If you want a judge of your work, you must apply to me. (*Seizing her hand.*)

Miss Hard. Ay, but the colours don't look well by candle-light. You shall see all in the morning. (*Struggling.*)

Marl. And why not now, my angel? Such beauty fires beyond the power of resistance. Pshaw! the father here! My old luck! I never nicked seven, that I did not throw ames-ace three times following. (*Exit* MARLOW.)

Enter HARDCASTLE, *who stands in surprise.*

Hard. So, madam! So I find *this* is your *modest* lover! This is your humble admirer, that kept his eyes fixed on the ground, and only adored at humble distance. Kate, Kate! art thou not ashamed to deceive your father so?

Miss Hard. Never trust me, dear papa, but he's still the modest man I first took him for; you'll be convinced of it as well as I.

Hard. By the hand of my body, I believe his impudence is infectious! Didn't I see him seize your hand? didn't I see him haul you about like a milk-maid? and now you talk of his respect and his modesty, forsooth!

Miss Hard. But if I shortly convince you of his modesty; that he has only the faults that will pass off with time, and the virtues that will improve with age, I hope you'll forgive him.

Hard. The girl would actually make one run mad; I tell you, I'll not be convinced. I am convinced. He has scarcely been three hours in the house, and he has already encroached on all my prerogatives. You may like his impudence, and call it modesty; but my son-in-law, madam, must have very different qualifications.

Miss Hard. Sir, I ask but this night to convince you.

Hard. You shall not have half the time; for I have thoughts of turning him out this very hour.

Miss Hard. Give me that hour, then, and I hope to satisfy you.

Hard. Well, an hour let it be, then. But I'll have no trifling with your father. All fair and open, do you mind me?

Miss Hard. I hope, sir, you have ever found that I considered your commands as my pride; for your kindness is such that my duty as yet has been inclination. (*Exeunt.*)

Marlow. Why not now, my angel? Pshaw! the father here! My old luck! . . . .

Hardcastle. So, madam! So I find *this* is your *modest* lover! This is your humble admirer, that kept his eyes fixed on the ground, and only adored at humble distance. Kate, Kate! art thou not ashamed to deceive your father so?

Act III. Scene I.

C. Morten

J. COOPER Sc.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Enter* HASTINGS *and* MISS NEVILLE.

Hast. You surprise me! Sir Charles Marlow expected here this night? Where have you had your information?

Miss Nev. You may depend upon it. I just saw his letter to Mr. Hardcastle, in which he tells him he intends setting out a few hours after his son.

Hast. Then, my Constance, all must be completed before he arrives. He knows me; and should he find me here, would discover my name, and perhaps my designs, to the rest of the family.

Miss Nev. The jewels, I hope, are safe.

Hast. Yes, yes. I have sent them to Marlow, who keeps the keys of our baggage. In the meantime, I'll go to prepare matters for our elopement. I have had the squire's promise of a fresh pair of horses: and, if I should not see him again, will write him further directions. (*Exit.*)

Miss Nev. Well, success attend you. In the meantime, I'll go amuse my aunt with the old pretence of a violent passion for my cousin. (*Exit.*)

Enter MARLOW, *followed by a* Servant.

Marl. I wonder what Hastings could mean by sending me so valuable a thing as a casket to keep for him, when he knows the only place I have is the seat of a post-coach at an inn-door? Have you deposited the casket with the landlady, as I ordered you? Have you put it into her own hands?

Serv. Yes, your honour.

Marl. She said she'd keep it safe, did she?

Serv. Yes, she said she'd keep it safe enough; she asked me how I came by it, and she said she had a great mind to make me give an account of myself. (*Exit* Servant.)

Marl. Ha! ha! ha! They're safe, however. What an unaccountable set of beings have we got amongst! This little barmaid, though, runs in my head most strangely, and drives out the absurdities of all the rest of the family. She's mine, she must be mine, or I'm greatly mistaken.

Enter HASTINGS.

Hast. Bless me! I quite forgot to tell her that I intended to prepare at the bottom of the garden. Marlow here, and in spirits, too!

Marl. Give me joy, George! Crown me, shadow me with laurels! Well, George, after all, we modest fellows don't want for success among the women.

Hast. Some women, you mean. But what success has your honour's modesty been crowned with now, that it grows so insolent upon us?

Marl. Didn't you see the tempting, brisk, lovely little thing that runs about the house, with a bunch of keys to its girdle?

Hast. Well, and what then?

Marl. She's mine, you rogue you. Such fire, such motion, such eyes, such lips—but, egad! she would not let me kiss them, though.

Hast. But are you so sure, so very sure of her?

Marl. Why, man, she talked of showing me her work above stairs, and I'm to improve the pattern.

Hast. You have taken care, I hope, of the casket I sent you to lock up? It's in safety?

Marl. Yes, yes; it's safe enough. I have taken care of it. But how could you think the seat of a post-coach, at an inn-door, a place of safety? Ah! numskull! I have taken better precautions for you than you did for yourself. I have——

Hast. What?

Marl. I have sent it to the landlady, to keep for you.

Hast. To the landlady!

Marl. The landlady.

Hast. You did!

Marl. I did. She's to be answerable for its forthcoming, you know.

Hast. Yes, she'll bring it forth, with a witness.

Marl. Wasn't I right? I believe you'll allow that I acted prudently upon this occasion.

Hast. (*Aside.*) He must not see my uneasiness.

Marl. You seem a little disconcerted, though, methinks. Sure nothing has happened.

Hast. No, nothing. Never was in better spirits in all my life. And so you left it with the landlady, who, no doubt, very readily undertook the charge?

Marl. Rather too readily. For she not only kept the casket; but, through her great precaution, was going to keep the messenger too. Ha! ha! ha!

Hast. He! he! he! They are safe, however.

Marl. As a guinea in a miser's purse.

Hast. (*Aside.*) So now all hopes of fortune are at an end, and we must set off without it. (*To him.*) Well, Charles, I'll leave you to your meditations on the pretty barmaid; and, he! he! he! may you be as successful for yourself, as you have been for me! (*Exit.*)

Marl. Thank ye, George!

Enter HARDCASTLE.

Hard. I no longer know my own house. It's turned all topsy-turvy. His servants have got drunk already. I'll bear it no longer; and yet, for my respect for his father, I'll be calm. (*To him.*) Mr. Marlow, your servant. I'm your very humble servant. (*Bowing low.*)

Marl. Sir, your humble servant. (*Aside.*) What's to be the wonder now?

Hard. I believe, sir, you must be sensible, sir, that no man alive ought to be more welcome than your father's son, sir. I hope you think so.

Marl. I do, from my soul, sir. I don't want much entreaty. I generally make my father's son welcome wherever he goes.

Hard. I believe you do, from my soul, sir. But though I say nothing to your own conduct, that of your servants is insufferable. Their manner of drinking is setting a very bad example in this house, I assure you.

Marl. I protest, my very good sir, that's no fault of mine. If they don't drink as they ought, *they* are to blame. I ordered them not to spare the cellar: I did, I assure you. (*To the side scene.*) Here, let one of my servants come up. (*To him.*) My positive directions were, that as I did not drink myself, they should make up for my deficiencies below.

Hard. Then, they had your orders for what they do! I'm satisfied.

Marl. They had, I assure you. You shall hear from one of themselves.

Enter Servant, *drunk.*

Marl. You, Jeremy! Come forward, sirrah! What were my orders? Were you not told to drink freely, and call for what you thought fit, for the good of the house?

Hard. (*Aside.*) I begin to lose my patience.

Jeremy. Please your honour, liberty and Fleet Street for ever! Though I'm but a servant, I'm as good as another man. I'll drink for no man before supper, sir! Good liquor will sit upon a good supper; but a good supper will not sit upon—(*hiccup*)—upon my conscience, sir.

Marl. You see, my old friend, the fellow is as drunk as he can possibly be. I don't know what you'd have more, unless you'd have the poor fellow soused in a beer-barrel.

Hard. Zounds! He'll drive me distracted if I contain myself any longer. (*Aside.*) Mr. Marlow, sir; I have submitted to your insolence for more than four hours, and I see no likelihood of its coming to an end. I'm now resolved to be master here, sir; and I desire that you and your drunken pack may leave my house directly.

Marl. Leave your house? Sure you jest, my good friend! What! when I'm doing what I can to please you?

Hard. I tell you, sir, you don't please me; so I desire you'll leave my house.

Marl. Sure you cannot be serious! At this time o'night, and such a night! You only mean to banter me.

Hard. I tell you, sir, I'm serious; and, now that my passions are roused, I say this house is mine, sir; this house is mine, and I command you to leave it directly!

Marl. Ha! ha! ha! A puddle in a storm. I shan't stir a step, I assure you. (*In a serious tone.*) This your house, fellow! It's my house. This is my house. Mine, while I choose to stay. What right have you to bid me leave this house, sir? I never met with such impudence, never in my whole life before.

Marlow. You see, my old friend, the fellow is as drunk as he can possibly be. I don't know what you'd have more . . . .
Hardcastle. Zounds He'll drive me distracted. *Act IV. Scene I.*

Hard. Nor I, confound me if ever I did. To come to my house, to call for what he likes, to turn me out of my own chair, to insult the family, to order his servants to get drunk, and then to tell me, *This house is mine, sir.* By all that's impudent, it makes me laugh. Ha! ha! Pray, sir (*bantering*), as you take the house, what think you of taking the rest of the furniture? There's a pair of silver candlesticks, and there's a fire-screen, and here's a pair of brazen-nosed bellows—perhaps you may take a fancy to them.

Marl. Bring me your bill, sir; bring me your bill, and let's make no more words about it.

Hard. There are a set of prints, too. What think you of the "Rake's Progress" for your own apartment?

Marl. Bring me your bill, I say; and I'll leave you and your house directly.

Hard. Then there's a mahogany table, that you may see your own face in.

Marl. My bill, I say.

Hard. I had forgot the great chair, for your own particular slumbers, after a hearty meal.

Marl. Zounds! bring me my bill, I say; and let's hear no more on't.

Hard. Young man, young man, from your father's letter to me, I was taught to expect a well-bred, modest man as a visitor here; but now I find

him no better than a coxcomb, and a bully. But he will be down here presently, and shall hear more of it. (*Exit.*)

Marl. How's this? Sure I have not mistaken the house! Everything looks like an inn. The servants cry, *Coming*. The attendance is awkward; the barmaid, too, to attend us. But she's here, and will further inform me. Whither so fast, child? A word with you.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE.

Miss Hard. Let it be short, then. I'm in a hurry. (*Aside.*) I believe he begins to find out his mistake; but it's too soon quite to undeceive him.

Marl. Pray, child, answer me one question. What are you, and what may your business in this house be?

Miss Hard. A relation of the family, sir.

Marl. What! a poor relation?

Miss Hard. Yes, sir; a poor relation, appointed to keep the keys, and to see that the guests want nothing in my power to give them.

Marl. That is, you act as the barmaid of this inn.

Miss Hard. Inn! Oh, la! What brought that in your head? One of the best families in the country keep an inn! Ha! ha! ha! old Mr. Hardcastle's house an inn!

Marl. Mr. Hardcastle's house! Is this house Mr. Hardcastle's house, child?

Miss Hard. Ay, sure. Whose else should it be?

Marl. So then all's out, and I have been imposed on. Oh, confound my stupid head! I shall be laughed at over the whole town. I shall be stuck up in caricatura in all the print shops; the Dullissimo Maccaroni. To mistake this house, of all others, for an inn; and my father's old friend for an innkeeper! What a swaggering puppy must he take me for! What a silly puppy do I find myself! There again, may I be hanged, my dear, but I mistook you for the barmaid.

Miss Hard. Dear me! dear me! I'm sure there's nothing in my *behaviour* to put me upon a level with one of that stamp.

Marl. Nothing, my dear, nothing. But I was in for a list of blunders, and could not help making you a subscriber. My stupidity saw everything the wrong way. I mistook your assiduity for assurance, and your simplicity for allurement. But it's over. This house I no more show *my* face in.

Miss Hard. I hope, sir, I have done nothing to disoblige you. I'm sure I should be sorry to affront any gentleman who has been so polite, and said so many civil things to me. I'm sure I should be sorry *(pretending to cry)* if he left the family upon my account. I'm sure I should be sorry, people said anything amiss, since I have no fortune but my character.

Marl. (*Aside.*) By Heaven, she weeps. This is the first mark of tenderness I ever had from a modest woman, and it touches me. (*To her.*) Excuse me, my lovely girl, you are the only part of the family I leave with reluctance. But to be plain with you, the difference of our birth, fortune, and education,

make an honourable connection impossible; and I can never harbour a thought of bringing ruin upon one whose only fault was being too lovely.

Miss Hard. (*Aside.*) Generous man! I now begin to admire him. (*To him.*) But I'm sure my family is as good as Mr. Hardcastle's; and though I'm poor, that's no great misfortune to a contented mind; and until this moment, I never thought that it was bad to want fortune.

Marl. And why now, my pretty simplicity?

Miss Hard. Because it puts me at a distance from one, that if I had a thousand pound, I would give it all to.

Marl. (*Aside.*) This simplicity bewitches me so, that if I stay I'm undone. I must make one bold effort, and leave her. (*To her.*) Your partiality in my favour, my dear, touches me most sensibly; and were I to live for myself alone, I could easily fix my choice. But I owe too much to the opinion of the world, too much to the authority of a father, so that—I can scarcely speak it—it affects me. Farewell. (*Exit.*)

Miss Hard. I never knew half his merit till now. He shall not go, if I have power or art to detain him. I'll still preserve the character in which I stooped to conquer; but will undeceive my papa, who, perhaps, may laugh him out of his resolution. (*Exit.*)

Enter TONY, MISS NEVILLE.

Tony. Ay, you may steal for yourselves the next time. I have done my duty. She has got the jewels again, that's a sure thing; but she believes it was all a mistake of the servants.

Miss Nev. But, my dear cousin, sure you won't forsake us in this distress. If she in the least suspects that I'm going off, I shall certainly be locked up, or sent to my Aunt Pedigree's, which is ten times worse.

Tony. To be sure, aunts of all kinds are bad things; but what can I do? I have got you a pair of horses that will fly like Whistle-jacket, and I'm sure you can't say but I have courted you nicely before her face. Here she comes; we must court a bit or two more, for fear she should suspect us.

(*They retire and seem to fondle.*)

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE.

Mrs. Hard. Well, I was greatly fluttered, to be sure. But my son tells me it was all a mistake of the servants. I shan't be easy, however, till they are fairly married, and then let her keep her own fortune. But what do I see? Fondling together, as I'm alive. I never saw Tony so sprightly before. Ah! have I caught you, my pretty doves? What! billing, exchanging stolen glances, and broken murmurs? Ah!

Tony. As for murmurs, mother, we grumble a little, now and then, to be sure. But there's no love lost between us.

Mrs. Hard. A mere sprinkling, Tony, upon the flame, only to make it burn brighter.

Miss Nev. Cousin Tony promises to give us more of his company at home. Indeed, he shan't leave us any more. It won't leave us, cousin Tony, will it?

Tony. Oh! it's a pretty creature. No, I'd sooner leave my horse in a pound, than leave you, when you smile upon one so. Your laugh makes you so becoming.

Miss Nev. Agreeable cousin! Who can help admiring that natural humour, that pleasant, broad, red, thoughtless (*patting his cheek*), ah! it's a bold face.

Mrs. Hard. Pretty innocence!

Tony. I'm sure I always loved cousin Con's hazel eyes, and her pretty long fingers, that she twists this way and that, over the haspicholls, like a parcel of bobbins.

Mrs. Hard. Ah! he would charm the bird from the tree. I was never so happy before. My boy takes after his father, poor Mr. Lumpkin, exactly. The jewels, my dear Con, shall be yours incontinently. You shall have them. Isn't he a sweet boy, my dear? You shall be married to-morrow, and we'll put off the rest of his education, like Mr. Drowsy's sermons, to a fitter opportunity.

Enter DIGGORY.

Digg. Where's the 'squire? I have got a letter for your worship.

Tony. Give it to my mamma. She reads all my letters first.

Digg. I had orders to deliver it into your own hands.

Tony. Who does it come from?

Digg. Your worship mun ask that o' the letter itself.

Tony. I could wish to know, though. (*Turning the letter and gazing on it.*)

Miss Nev. (*Aside.*) Undone, undone! A letter to him from Hastings. I know the hand. If my aunt sees it, we are ruined for ever. I'll keep her employed a little, if I can. (*To* MRS. HARDCASTLE.) But I have not told you, madam, of my cousin's smart answer just now to Mr. Marlow. We so laughed. You must know, madam—this way a little; for he must not hear us. (*They confer.*)

Tony. (*Still gazing.*) A —— cramp piece of penmanship, as ever I saw in my life. I can read your print-hand very well. But here there are such handles, and shanks, and dashes, that one can scarce tell the head from the tail. "To Anthony Lumpkin, Esq." It's very odd, I can read the outside of my letters, where my own name is, well enough. But when I come to open it, it is all—buzz. That's hard, very hard; for the inside of the letter is always the cream of the correspondence.

Mrs. Hard. Ha! ha! ha! Very well, very well. And so my son was too hard for the philosopher.

Miss Nev. Yes, madam; but you must hear the rest, madam. A little more this way, or he may hear us. You'll hear how he puzzled him again.

Mrs. Hard. He seems strangely puzzled now himself, methinks.

Tony. (*Still gazing.*) An up and down hand, as if it was disguised in liquor. (*Reading.*) "Dear Sir." Ay, that's that. Then there's an *M*, and a *T*, and a *S*; but whether the next be *izzard* or an *R*, confound me, I cannot tell.

Tony. Reading. "Dear Sir." Ay, that's that. Then there's an *M*, and a *T*, and a *S*; but whether the next be *izzard* or an *R*, confound me, I cannot tell. *Act IV. Scene I.*

Mrs. Hard. What's that, my dear? Can I give you any assistance?

Miss Nev. Pray, aunt, let me read it. Nobody reads a cramp hand better than I. (*Twitching the letter from him.*) Do you know who it is from?

Tony. Can't tell, except from Dick Ginger, the feeder.

Miss Nev. Ay, so it is. (*Pretending to read.*) "Dear 'Squire,—Hoping that you're in health, as I am at this present. The gentlemen of the Shake-bag club has cut the gentlemen of the Goose-green quite out of feather. The odds—um—odd battle—um—long fighting—um—" Here, here; it's all about cocks and fighting; it's of no consequence; here, put it up, put it up.

(*Thrusting the crumpled letter upon him.*)

Tony. But I tell you, miss, it's of all the consequence in the world. I would not lose the rest of it for a guinea. Here, mother, do you make it out. Of no consequence! (*Giving* MRS. HARDCASTLE *the letter.*)

Mrs. Hard. How's this? (*Reads.*)—

Dear 'Squire,—I'm now waiting for Miss Neville, with a post-chaise and pair, at the bottom of the garden, but I find my horses yet unable to perform the journey. I expect you'll assist us with a pair of fresh horses, as you promised. Dispatch is necessary, as the *hag* (ay, the hag), your mother, will otherwise suspect us. Yours, HASTINGS.

Grant me patience! I shall run distracted. My rage chokes me!

Marlow. So, I have been finely used here among you. Rendered contemptible, driven into ill-manners, despised, insulted, laughed at.

Tony. Here's another. We shall have old Bedlam broke loose presently.

Miss Neville And there, sir, is the gentleman to whom we all owe every obligation.

Act IV. Scene I.

Miss Nev. I hope, madam, you'll suspend your resentment for a few moments, and not impute to me any impertinence, or sinister design that belongs to another.

Mrs. Hard. (*Curtseying very low.*) Fine-spoken madam, you are most miraculously polite and engaging, and quite the very pink of courtesy and circumspection, madam. (*Changing her tone.*) And you, you great ill-fashioned oaf, with scarce sense enough to keep your mouth shut! were you, too, joined against me? But I'll defeat all your plots in a moment. As for you, madam, since you have got a pair of fresh horses ready, it would be cruel to disappoint them. So, if you please, instead of running away with your spark, prepare, this very moment, to run off with *me*. Your old Aunt Pedigree will keep you secure, I'll warrant me. You too, sir, may mount your horse, and guard us upon the way. Here, Thomas, Roger, Diggory, I'll show you that I wish you better than you do yourselves. (*Exit.*)

Miss Nev. So, now I'm completely ruined.

Tony. Ay, that's a sure thing.

Miss Nev. What better could be expected, from being connected with such a stupid fool, and after all the nods and signs I made him?

Tony. By the laws, miss, it was your own cleverness, and not my stupidity, that did your business. You were so nice, and so busy, with your Shake-bags and Goose-greens, that I thought you could never be making believe.

Enter HASTINGS.

Hast. So, sir, I find by my servant that you have shown my letter and betrayed us. Was this well done, young gentleman?

Tony. Here's another. Ask miss, there, who betrayed you. Ecod, it was her doing, not mine.

Enter MARLOW.

Marl. So, I have been finely used here among you. Rendered contemptible, driven into ill-manners, despised, insulted, laughed at.

Tony. Here's another. We shall have old Bedlam broke loose presently.

Miss Nev. And there, sir, is the gentleman to whom we all owe every obligation.

Marl. What can I say to him, a mere boy, an idiot, whose ignorance and age are a protection?

Hast. A poor contemptible booby, that would but disgrace correction.

Miss Nev. Yet with cunning and malice enough to make himself merry with all our embarrassments.

Hast An insensible cub!

Marl. Replete with tricks and mischief.

Tony. Baw! but I'll fight you both, one after the other—with baskets.

Marl. As for him, he's below resentment. But your conduct, Mr. Hastings, requires an explanation. You knew of my mistakes, yet would not undeceive me.

Hast. Tortured as I am with my own disappointments, is this a time for explanations? It is not friendly, Mr. Marlow.

Marl. But, sir——

Miss Nev. Mr. Marlow, we never kept on your mistake, till it was too late to undeceive you. Be pacified.

Enter Servant.

Serv. My mistress desires you'll get ready immediately, madam. The horses are putting to. Your hat and things are in the next room. We are to go thirty miles before morning. (*Exit* Servant.)

Miss Nev. Well, well; I'll come presently.

Marl. (*To* HASTINGS.) Was it well done, sir, to assist in rendering me ridiculous? To hang me out for the scorn of all my acquaintance? Depend upon it, sir, I shall expect an explanation.

Hast. Was it well done, sir, if you're upon that subject, to deliver what I entrusted to yourself to the care of another, sir?

Miss Nev. Mr. Hastings, Mr. Marlow, why will you increase my distress by this groundless dispute? I implore, I entreat you——

Enter Servant.

Serv. Your cloak, madam. My mistress is impatient.

Miss Nev. I come. Pray be pacified. If I leave you thus, I shall die with apprehension.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Your fan, muff, and gloves, madam. The horses are waiting.

Miss Nev. Oh, Mr. Marlow! if you knew what a scene of constraint and ill-nature lies before me, I'm sure it would convert your resentment into pity.

Marl. I'm so distracted with a variety of passions, that I don't know what I do. Forgive me, madam. George, forgive me. You know my hasty temper, and should not exasperate it.

Hast. The torture of my situation is my only excuse.

Miss Nev. Well, my dear Hastings, if you have that esteem for me that I think, that I am sure you have, your constancy for three years will but increase the happiness of our future connection. If——

Mrs. Hard. (*Within.*) Miss Neville. Constance, why, Constance, I say.

Miss Nev. I'm coming. Well, constancy. Remember, constancy is the word. (*Exit.*)

Hast. My heart, how can I support this! To be so near happiness, and such happiness!

Marl. (*To* TONY.) You see now, young gentleman, the effects of your folly. What might be amusement to you, is here disappointment, and even distress.

Tony. (*From a reverie.*) Ecod, I have hit it. It's here. Your hands. Yours and yours, my poor sulky. My boots there, ho! Meet me two hours

hence at the bottom of the garden; and if you don't find Tony Lumpkin a more good-natured fellow than you thought for, I'll give you leave to take my best horse, and Bet Bouncer into the bargain. Come along. My boots, ho!

(*Exeunt.*)

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Scene continues.*

Enter HASTINGS *and* SERVANT.

Hast. You saw the old lady and Miss Neville drive off, you say?

Serv. Yes, your honour; they went off in a post-coach, and the young 'squire went on horseback. They're thirty miles off by this time.

Hast. Then all my hopes are over.

Serv. Yes, sir. Old Sir Charles is arrived. He and the old gentleman of the house have been laughing at Mr. Marlow's mistake this half-hour. They are coming this way.

Hast. Then I must not be seen. So now to my fruitless appointment at the bottom of the garden. This is about the time. (*Exit.*)

Enter SIR CHARLES *and* HARDCASTLE.

Hard. Ha! ha! ha! The peremptory tone in which he sent forth his sublime commands!

Sir Charles. And the reserve with which I suppose he treated all your advances!

Hard. And yet he might have seen something in me above a common innkeeper, too.

Sir Charles. Yes, Dick, but he mistook you for an uncommon innkeeper, ha! ha! ha!

Hard. Well, I'm in too good spirits to think of anything but joy. Yes, my dear friend, this union of our families will make our personal friendships hereditary; and though my daughter's fortune is but small——

Sir Charles. Why, Dick, will you talk of fortune to *me?* My son is possessed of more than a competence already, and can want nothing but a good and virtuous girl to share his happiness and increase it. If they like each other, as you say they do——

Hard. *If*, man! I tell you they *do* like each other. My daughter as good as told me so.

Sir Charles. But girls are apt to flatter themselves, you know.

Hard. I saw him grasp her hand in the warmest manner myself; and here he comes to put you out of your *ifs*, I warrant him.

Sir Charles Marlow. But did he profess any attachment?
Miss Hardcastle. A lasting one. . . . .
Hardcastle. Now, my friend, I hope you are satisfied? *Act V. Scene I.*

Enter MARLOW.

Marl. I come, sir, once more, to ask pardon for my strange conduct. I can scarce reflect on my insolence without confusion.

Hard. Tut, boy, a trifle. You take it too gravely. An hour or two's laughing with my daughter will set all to rights again. She'll never like you the worse for it.

Marl. Sir, I shall be always proud of her approbation.

Hard. Approbation is but a cold word, Mr. Marlow: if I am not deceived, you have something more than approbation thereabouts. You take me?

Marl. Really, sir, I have not that happiness.

Hard. Come, boy, I'm an old fellow, and know what's what, as well as you that are younger. I know what has passed between you; but mum.

Marl. Sure, sir, nothing has passed between us, but the most profound respect on my side, and the most distant reserve on hers. You don't think, sir, that my impudence has been passed upon all the rest of the family?

Hard. Impudence! No, I don't say that. Not quite impudence. Though girls like to be played with, and rumpled a little too, sometimes. But she has told no tales, I assure you.

Marl. I never gave her the slightest cause.

Hard. Well, well, I like modesty in its place well enough. But this is over-acting, young gentleman. You *may* be open. Your father and I will like you the better for it.

Marl. May I die, sir, if I ever——

Hard. I tell you, she don't dislike you; and as I'm sure you like her——

Marl. Dear sir—I protest, sir——

Hard. I see no reason why you should not be joined as fast as the parson can tie you.

Marl. But hear me, sir——

Hard. Your father approves the match, I admire it, every moment's delay will be doing mischief, so——

Marl. But why won't you hear me? By all that's just and true, I never gave Miss Hardcastle the slightest mark of my attachment, or even the most distant hint to suspect me of affection. We had but one interview, and that was formal, modest, and uninteresting.

Hard. (*Aside.*) This fellow's formal, modest impudence is beyond bearing.

Sir Charles. And you never grasped her hand, or made any protestations?

Marl. As Heaven is my witness, I came down in obedience to your commands. I saw the lady without emotion, and parted without reluctance. I hope you'll exact no further proofs of my duty, nor prevent me from leaving a house in which I suffer so many mortifications. (*Exit.*)

Sir Charles. I'm astonished at the air of sincerity with which he parted.

Hard. And I'm astonished at the deliberate intrepidity of his assurance.

Sir Charles. I dare pledge my life and honour upon his truth.

Hard. Here comes my daughter, and I would stake my happiness upon her veracity.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE.

Hard. Kate, come hither, child. Answer us sincerely, and without reserve: has Mr. Marlow made you any professions of love and affection?

Miss Hard. The question is very abrupt, sir. But since you require unreserved sincerity, I think he has.

Hard. (*To* SIR CHARLES.) You see.

Sir Charles. And pray, madam, have you and my son had more than one interview?

Miss Hard. Yes, sir, several.

Hard. (*To* SIR CHARLES.) You see.

Sir Charles. But did he profess any attachment?

Miss Hard. A lasting one.

Sir Charles. Did he talk of love?

Miss Hard. Much, sir.

Sir Charles. Amazing! and all this formally?

Miss Hard. Formally.

Hard. Now, my friend, I hope you are satisfied?

Sir Charles. And how did he behave, madam?

Miss Hard. As most professed admirers do. Said some civil things of my face; talked much of his want of merit, and the greatness of mine; mentioned his heart; gave a short tragedy speech, and ended with pretended rapture.

Sir Charles. Now I'm perfectly convinced, indeed. I know his conversation among women to be modest and submissive. This forward, canting, ranting manner by no means describes him, and I am confident he never sat for the picture.

Miss Hard. Then what, sir, if I should convince you to your face of my sincerity? If you and my papa, in about half an hour, will place yourselves behind that screen, you shall hear him declare his passion to me in person.

Sir Charles. Agreed. And if I find him what you describe, all my happiness in him must have an end. (*Exit.*)

Miss Hard. And if you don't find him what I describe—I fear my happiness must never have a beginning. (*Exeunt.*)

Scene changes to the back of the Garden.

Enter HASTINGS.

Hast. What an idiot am I, to wait here for a fellow who probably takes a delight in mortifying me! He never intended to be punctual, and I'll wait no longer. What do I see? It is he, and perhaps with news of my Constance.

Enter TONY, *booted and spattered.*

Hast. My honest 'squire! I now find you a man of your word. This looks like friendship.

Tony. Ay, I'm your friend, and the best friend you have in the world, if you knew but all. This riding by night, by-the-by, is cursedly tiresome. It has shook me worse than the basket of a stage-coach.

Hast. But how? Where did you leave your fellow-travellers? Are they in safety? Are they housed?

Tony. Five-and-twenty miles in two hours and a half is no such bad driving. The poor beasts have smoked for it. Rabbit me, but I'd rather ride forty miles after a fox, than ten with such *varment.*

Hast. Well, but where have you left the ladies? I die with impatience.

Tony. Left them? Why, where should I leave them, but where I found them?

Hast. This is a riddle.

Tony. Riddle me this then. What's that goes round the house, and round the house, and never touches the house?

Hast. I'm still astray.

Tony. Why, that's it, mon. I have led them astray. By jingo, there's not a pond or slough within five miles of the place, but they can tell the taste of.

Hast. Ha, ha, ha! I understand: you took them in a round, while they supposed themselves going forward. And so you have at last brought them home again.

Tony. You shall hear. I first took them down Feather-bed Lane, where we stuck fast in the mud. I then rattled them crack over the stones of Up-and-Down Hill—I then introduced them to the gibbet, on Heavy-tree Heath; and from that with a circumbendibus, I fairly lodged them in the horse-pond at the bottom of the garden.

Hast. But no accident, I hope.

Tony. No, no. Only mother is confoundedly frightened. She thinks herself forty miles off. She's sick of the journey, and the cattle can scarce crawl. So, if your own horses be ready, you may whip off with cousin, and I'll be bound that no soul here can budge a foot to follow you.

Hast. My dear friend, how can I be grateful?

Tony. Ay, now it's dear friend, noble 'squire. Just now, it was all idiot, cub, and run me through the guts. Confound *your* way of fighting, I say. After we take a knock in this part of the country, we kiss and be friends. But, if you had run me through the guts, then I should be dead, and you might go kiss the hangman.

Hast. The rebuke is just. But I must hasten to relieve Miss Neville; if you keep the old lady employed, I promise to take care of the young one.

(*Exit* HASTINGS.)

Tony. Never fear me. Here she comes. Vanish! She's got from the pond, and draggled up to the waist like a mermaid.

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE.

Mrs. Hard. Oh, Tony, I'm killed—shook—battered to death. I shall never survive it. That last jolt, that laid us against the quickset hedge, has done my business.

Tony. Alack! mamma, it was all your own fault. You would be for running away by night, without knowing one inch of the way.

Mrs. Hard. I wish we were at home again. I never met so many accidents in so short a journey. Drenched in the mud, overturned in a ditch, stuck fast in a slough, jolted to a jelly, and at last to lose our way! Whereabouts do you think we are, Tony?

Tony. By my guess we should be upon Crackskull Common, about forty miles from home.

Mrs. Hard. Oh, lud! oh, lud! the most notorious spot in all the country. We only want a robbery to make a complete night on't.

Tony. Don't be afraid, mamma! don't be afraid. Two of the five that were kept here are hanged, and the other three may not find us. Don't be afraid. Is that a man that's galloping behind us? No; it's only a tree. Don't be afraid.

Mrs Hardcastle. Here, good gentleman, whet your rage upon me. Take my money, my life; but spare that young gentleman, spare my child. . . . . Take compassion on us, good Mr Highwayman.

Hardcastle. . . . . . What! Dorothy, don't you know *me?*

Act V. Scene I.

C. Morten

LINTON Sc.

Mrs. Hard. The fright will certainly kill me.

Tony. Do you see anything like a black hat moving behind the thicket?

Mrs. Hard. Oh, death!

Tony. No, it's only a cow. Don't be afraid, mamma: don't be afraid.

Mrs. Hard. As I'm alive, Tony, I see a man coming towards us. Ah! I'm sure on't. If he perceives us, we are undone.

Tony. (*Aside.*) Father-in-law, by all that's unlucky, come to take one of his night walks. (*To her.*) Ah! it's a highwayman, with pistols as long as my arm. An ill-looking fellow.

Mrs. Hard. Good Heaven! defend us! He approaches.

Tony. Do you hide yourself in that thicket, and leave me to manage him. If there be any danger, I'll cough and cry—hem! When I cough, be sure to keep close. (MRS. HARDCASTLE *hides behind a tree, in the back scene.*)

Enter HARDCASTLE.

Hard. I'm mistaken, or I heard voices of people in want of help. Oh, Tony, is that you? I did not expect you so soon back. Are your mother and her charge in safety?

Tony. Very safe, sir, at my Aunt Pedigree's. Hem!

Mrs. Hard. (*From behind.*) Ah, death! I find there's danger.

Hard. Forty miles in three hours; sure that's too much, my youngster.

Tony. Stout horses and willing minds make short journeys, as they say. Hem!

Mrs. Hard. (*From behind.*) Sure he'll do the dear boy no harm!

Hard. But I heard a voice here; I shall be glad to know from whence it came.

Tony. It was I, sir; talking to myself, sir. I was saying, that forty miles in three hours was very good going—hem! As to be sure, it was—hem! I have got a sort of cold by being out in the air. We'll go in, if you please—hem!

Hard. But if you talked to yourself, you did not answer yourself. I am certain I heard two voices, and am resolved (*raising his voice*) to find the other out.

Mrs. Hard. (From behind.) Oh! he's coming to find me out. Oh!

Tony. What need you go, sir, if I tell you—hem! I'll lay down my life for the truth—hem! I'll tell you all, sir. (*Detaining him.*)

Hard. I tell you, I will not be detained. I insist on seeing. It's in vain to expect I'll believe you.

Mrs. Hard. (*running forward from behind.*) Oh, lud, he'll murder my poor boy, my darling! Here, good gentleman, whet your rage upon me. Take my money, my life; but spare that young gentleman, spare my child, if you have any mercy.

Hard. My wife! as I'm a Christian. From whence can she come, or what does she mean?

Mrs. Hard. (*Kneeling.*) Take compassion on us, good Mr. Highwayman. Take our money, our watches, all we have; but spare our lives. We will never bring you to justice; indeed, we won't, good Mr. Highwayman.

Hard. I believe the woman's out of her senses. What! Dorothy, don't you know *me?*

Mrs. Hard. Mr. Hardcastle, as I'm alive! My fears blinded me. But who, my dear, could have expected to meet you here, in this frightful place, so far from home? What has brought you to follow us?

Hard. Sure, Dorothy, you have not lost your wits? So far from home, when you are within forty yards of your own door? (*To him.*) This is one of your old tricks, you graceless rogue, you. (*To her.*) Don't you know the gate, and the mulberry-tree? and don't you remember the horse-pond, my dear?

Mrs. Hard. Yes, I shall remember the horse-pond as long as I live: I have caught my death in it. (*To* TONY.) And is it to you, you graceless varlet, I owe all this? I'll teach you to abuse your mother, I will.

Tony. Ecod, mother, all the parish says you have spoiled me, and so you may take the fruits on't.

Mrs. Hard. I'll spoil you, I will. (*Follows him off the stage. Exit.*)

Hard. There's morality, however, in his reply. (*Exit.*)

Enter HASTINGS *and* MISS NEVILLE.

Hast. My dear Constance, why will you deliberate thus? If we delay a moment, all is lost for ever. Pluck up a little resolution, and we shall soon be out of the reach of her malignity.

Miss Nev. I find it impossible. My spirits are so sunk with the agitations I have suffered, that I am unable to face any new danger. Two or three years' patience will at last crown us with happiness.

Hast. Such a tedious delay is worse than inconstancy. Let us fly, my charmer. Let us date our happiness from this very moment. Perish fortune! Love and content will increase what we possess, beyond a monarch's revenue. Let me prevail.

Miss Nev. No, Mr. Hastings; no. Prudence once more comes to my relief, and I will obey its dictates. In the moment of passion, fortune may be despised; but it ever produces a lasting repentance. I'm resolved to apply to Mr. Hardcastle's compassion and justice for redress.

Hast. But though he had the will, he has not the power to relieve you.

Miss Nev. But he has influence, and upon that I am resolved to rely.

Hast. I have no hopes. But since you persist, I must reluctantly obey you.

(*Exeunt.*)

Scene changes.

Enter SIR CHARLES *and* MISS HARDCASTLE.

Sir Charles. What a situation am I in! If what you say appears, I shall then find a guilty son. If what he says be true, I shall then lose one that, of all others, I most wished for a daughter.

Miss Hard. I am proud of your approbation, and to show I merit it, if you place yourselves as I directed, you shall hear his explicit declaration. But he comes.

Sir Charles. I'll to your father, and keep him to the appointment.

(*Exit* SIR CHARLES.)

Enter MARLOW.

Marl. Though prepared for setting out, I come once more to take leave; nor did I, till this moment, know the pain I feel in the separation.

Miss Hard. (*In her own natural manner.*) I believe these sufferings cannot be very great, sir, which you can so easily remove. A day or two longer, perhaps, might lessen your uneasiness, by showing the little value of what you now think proper to regret.

Marl. (*Aside.*) This girl every moment improves upon me. (*To her.*) It must not be, madam. I have already trifled too long with my heart. My very pride begins to submit to my passion. The disparity of education and fortune, the anger of a parent, and the contempt of my equals, begin to lose their weight, and nothing can restore me to myself but this painful effort of resolution.

Miss Hard. Then go, sir. I'll urge nothing more to detain you. Though my family be as good as hers you came down to visit; and my education, I hope, not inferior, what are these advantages, without equal affluence? I must remain contented with the slight approbation of imputed merit; I must have only the mockery of your addresses, while all your serious aims are fixed on fortune.

Enter HARDCASTLE *and* SIR CHARLES *from behind.*

Sir Charles. Here, behind this screen.

Hard. Ay, ay, make no noise. I'll engage my Kate covers him with confusion at last.

Marl. By heavens, madam, fortune was ever my smallest consideration. Your beauty at first caught my eye; for who could see that without emotion? But every moment that I converse with you, steals in some new grace, heightens the picture, and gives it stronger expression. What at first seemed rustic plainness, now appears refined simplicity. What seemed forward assurance, now strikes me as the result of courageous innocence and conscious virtue.

Sir Charles. What can it mean? He amazes me!

Marlow. Does this look like security? Does this look like confidence? No, madam; every moment that shows me your merit, only serves to increase my diffidence and confusion. Here let me continue——

Sir Charles. I can hold it no longer. Charles, Charles, how hast thou deceived me! Is this your indifference, your uninteresting conversation?

Act V. Scene II.

Hard. I told you how it would be. Hush!

Marl. I am now determined to stay, madam; and I have too good an opinion of my father's discernment, when he sees you, to doubt his approbation.

Miss Hard. No, Mr. Marlow, I will not, cannot detain you. Do you think I could suffer a connection in which there is the smallest room for repentance? Do you think I would take the mean advantage of a transient passion, to load you with confusion? Do you think I could ever relish that happiness which was acquired by lessening yours?

Marl. By all that's good, I can have no happiness but what's in your power to grant me. Nor shall I ever feel repentance, but in not having seen your merits before. I will stay, even contrary to your wishes; and though you should persist to shun me, I will make my respectful assiduities atone for the levity of my past conduct.

Miss Hard. Sir, I must entreat you'll desist. As our acquaintance began, so let it end, in indifference. I might have given an hour or two to levity; but seriously, Mr. Marlow, do you think I could ever submit to a connection where *I* must appear mercenary, and *you* imprudent? Do you think I could ever catch at the confident addresses of a secure admirer?

Marl. (*Kneeling.*) Does this look like security? Does this look like confidence? No, madam; every moment that shows me your merit, only serves to increase my diffidence and confusion. Here let me continue——

Sir Charles. I can hold it no longer. Charles, Charles, how hast thou deceived me! Is this your indifference, your uninteresting conversation?

Hard. Your cold contempt; your formal interview? What have you to say now?

Marl. That I'm all amazement! What can it mean?

Hard. It means, that you can say and unsay things at pleasure. That you can address a lady in private, and deny it in public; that you have one story for us, and another for my daughter.

Marl. Daughter!—this lady your daughter!

Hard. Yes, sir, my only daughter; my Kate. Whose else should she be?

Marl. Oh, ——!

Miss Hard. Yes, sir, that very identical tall, squinting lady you were pleased to take me for. (*Curtseying.*) She that you addressed as the mild, modest, sentimental man of gravity, and the bold, forward, agreeable Rattle of the ladies' club; ha! ha! ha!

Marl. Zounds, there's no bearing this; it's worse than death.

Miss Hard. In which of your characters, sir, will you give us leave to address you? As the faltering gentleman, with looks on the ground, that speaks just to be heard, and hates hypocrisy; or the loud confident creature, that keeps it up with Mrs. Mantrap, and old Miss Biddy Buckskin, till three in the morning? ha! ha! ha!

Marl. Oh, —— my noisy head! I never attempted to be impudent yet, that I was not taken down. I must be gone.

Hard. By the hand of my body, but you shall not. I see it was all a mistake, and I am rejoiced to find it. You shall not, sir, I tell you. I know she'll forgive you. Won't you forgive him, Kate? We'll all forgive you. Take courage, man. (*They retire, she tormenting him, to the back scene.*)

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE. TONY.

Mrs. Hard. So, so, they're gone off. Let them go, I care not.

Hard. Who gone?

Mrs. Hard. My dutiful niece and her gentleman, Mr. Hastings, from town. He who came down with our modest visitor here.

Sir Charles. Who, my honest George Hastings? As worthy a fellow as lives; and the girl could not have made a more prudent choice.

Hard. Then, by the hand of my body, I'm proud of the connection.

Mrs. Hard. Well, if he has taken away the lady, he has not taken her fortune; that remains in this family, to console us for her loss.

Hard. Sure, Dorothy, you would not be so mercenary.

Mrs. Hard. Ay, that's my affair, not yours.

Hard. But you know, if your son, when of age, refuses to marry his cousin, her whole fortune is then at her own disposal.

Mrs. Hard. Ay, but he's not of age, and she has not thought proper to wait for his refusal.

Enter HASTINGS *and* MISS NEVILLE.

Mrs. Hard. (*Aside.*) What! returned so soon? I begin not to like it.

Hast. (*To* HARDCASTLE.) For my late attempt to fly off with your niece, let my present confusion be my punishment. We are now come back, to appeal from your justice to your humanity. By her father's consent, I first paid her my addresses, and our passions were first founded on duty.

Miss Nev. Since his death, I have been obliged to stoop to dissimulation to avoid oppression. In an hour of levity, I was ready even to give up my fortune to secure my choice. But I am now recovered from the delusion, and hope, from your tenderness, what is denied me from a nearer connection.

Mrs. Hard. Pshaw, pshaw! this is all but the whining end of a modern novel.

Hard. Be it what it will, I'm glad they're come back to reclaim their due. Come hither, Tony boy. Do you refuse this lady's hand whom I now offer you?

Tony. What signifies my refusing? You know I can't refuse her till I'm of age, father.

Hard. While I thought concealing your age, boy, was likely to conduce to your improvement, I concurred with your mother's desire, to keep it secret. But since I find she turns it to a wrong use, I must now declare you have been of age these three months.

Tony. Of age! Am I of age, father?

Hard. Above three months.

Tony. Then you'll see the first use I'll make of my liberty. (*Taking* MISS

Tony. (*Taking Miss Neville's hand.*) Witness all men by these presents, that I, Anthony Lumpkin, Esquire, of *blank* place, refuse you, Constantia Neville, spinster, of no place at all, for my true and lawful wife. So Constantia Neville may marry whom she pleases, and Tony Lumpkin is his own man again. *Act V. Scene I.*

NEVILLE'S *hand*)—Witness all men by these presents, that I, Anthony Lumpkin, Esquire, of *blank* place, refuse you, Constantia Neville, spinster, of no place at all, for my true and lawful wife. So Constantia Neville may marry whom she pleases, and Tony Lumpkin is his own man again.

Sir Charles. Oh, brave 'squire!

Hast. My worthy friend!

Mrs. Hard. My undutiful offspring!

Marl. Joy, my dear George; I give you joy sincerely. And could I prevail upon my little tyrant here, to be less arbitrary, I should be the happiest man alive, if you would return me the favour.

Hast. (*To* MISS HARDCASTLE.) Come, madam, you are now driven to the very last scene of all your contrivances. I know you like him, I'm sure he loves you, and you must and shall have him.

Hard. (*Joining their hands.*) And I say so too. And, Mr. Marlow, if she makes as good a wife as she has a daughter, I don't believe you'll ever repent your bargain. So now to supper. To-morrow we shall gather all the poor of the parish about us; and the mistakes of the night shall be crowned with a merry morning. So, boy, take her; and as you have been mistaken in the mistress, my wish is, that you may never be mistaken in the wife.

THE GOOD NATURED MAN.

INTRODUCTION.

THE comedy of "The Good-natured Man" was the first dramatic effort of Goldsmith. After many discouragements and delays, he succeeded in putting it on the stage of Covent Garden on the 29th of January, 1768. As an acting play, it never was permanently successful; nevertheless, its merits, as a dramatic composition, are far beyond those of many that retain their hold of the public favour. The plot is excellent: full of ingenious complications, well-contrived situations, and agreeable surprises that keep the interest ever alive. The dialogue, though it occasionally flags, is for the most part lively and pointed; sometimes felicitous in the extreme. There are fine strokes of wit, and much humour; sometimes broad, but never offensive, with a good deal of genuine sentiment. The character of Croaker is unique. It would be entirely original, did not the "Suspirius" of Dr. Johnson ("Rambler," No. 59) furnish Goldsmith with the crude idea, which he has so happily amplified and finished. Mrs. Croaker, whose sprightliness "could spread a horse-laugh through the pews of a tabernacle," contrasts charmingly with her husband. The by-plot between Leontine and Olivia gives rise to the happiest misapprehensions, and the letter of the lady's maid, which Croaker mistakes for that of an incendiary, is the most ingenious contrivance, as it was the greatest hit of the piece. One scene—that in which the bailiffs are introduced as friends of young Honeywood—met with most unmerited disapproval, and well-nigh turned the tide against the piece. The scene was "retrenched in representation," but retained entire in the printed copies, and ultimately restored upon the stage as one of the most attractive parts of the play. "Now-a-days," as Mr. Forster justly observes, "it is difficult to understand the objection which condemned it."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

MR. HONEYWOOD.	JARVIS.
CROAKER.	BUTLER.
LOFTY.	BAILIFF.
SIR WILLIAM HONEYWOOD.	DUBARDIEU.
LEONTINE.	POSTBOY.

WOMEN.

MISS RICHLAND.	GARNET.
OLIVIA.	LANDLADY
MRS. CROAKER.	

SCENE—*London.*

THE GOOD-NATURED MAN.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An apartment in* YOUNG HONEYWOOD'S *House.*

Enter SIR WILLIAM HONEYWOOD, *and* JARVIS.

Sir Will. Good Jarvis, make no apologies for this honest bluntness. Fidelity like yours is the best excuse for every freedom.

Jarvis. I can't help being blunt, and being very angry too, when I hear you talk of disinheriting so good, so worthy a young gentleman as your nephew, my master. All the world loves him.

Sir Will. Say rather, that he loves all the world; that is his fault.

Jarvis. I'm sure there is no part of it more dear to him than you are, though he has not seen you since he was a child.

Sir Will. What signifies his affection to me? or how can I be proud of a place in a heart where every sharper and coxcomb finds an easy entrance?

Jarvis. I grant that he's rather too good-natured; that he's too much every man's man; that he laughs this minute with one, and cries the next with another: but whose instructions may he thank for all this?

Sir Will. Not mine, sure! My letters to him during my employment in Italy, taught him only that philosophy which might prevent, not defend, his errors.

Jarvis. Faith, begging your honour's pardon, I'm sorry they taught him any philosophy at all; it has only served to spoil him. This same philosophy is a good horse in the stable, but an errant jade on a journey. For my own part, whenever I hear him mention the name on't, I'm always sure he's going to play the fool.

Sir Will. Don't let us ascribe his faults to his philosophy, I entreat you. No, Jarvis, his good nature arises rather from his fears of offending the importunate, than his desire of making the deserving happy.

Jarvis. What it rises from, I don't know. But, to be sure, everybody has it that asks it.

Sir Will. Ay, or that does not ask it. I have been now for some time a concealed spectator of his follies, and find them as boundless as his dissipation.

Jarvis. And yet, he has some fine name or other for them all. He calls

his extravagance, generosity; and his trusting everybody, universal benevolence. It was but last week he went security for a fellow whose face he scarce knew, and that he called an act of exalted mu—mu—munificence; ay, that was the name he gave it.

Sir Will. And upon that I proceed, as my last effort, though with very little hopes, to reclaim him. That very fellow has just absconded, and I have taken up the security. Now, my intention is, to involve him in fictitious distress, before he has plunged himself into real calamity; to arrest him for that very debt, to clap an officer upon him, and then let him see which of his friends will come to his relief.

Jarvis. Well, if I could but any way see him thoroughly vexed, every groan of his would be music to me; yet, I believe it is impossible. I have tried to fret him myself every morning these three years; but, instead of being angry, he sits as calmly to hear me scold, as he does to his hair-dresser.

Sir Will. We must try him once more, however, and I'll go this instant to put my scheme into execution; and I don't despair of succeeding, as by your means I can have frequent opportunities of being about him, without being known. What a pity it is, Jarvis, that any man's good-will to others should produce so much neglect of himself, as to require correction! Yet, we must touch his weaknesses with a delicate hand. There are some faults so nearly allied to excellence, that we can scarce weed out the vice without eradicating the virtue. (*Exit.*)

Jarvis. Well, go thy ways, Sir William Honeywood. It is not without reason that the world allows thee to be the best of men. But here comes his hopeful nephew; the strange, good-natured, foolish, open-hearted. And yet, all his faults are such that one loves him still the better for them.

Enter HONEYWOOD.

Honeywood. Well, Jarvis, what messages from my friends this morning?

Jarvis. You have no friends.

Honeywood. Well, from my acquaintance then?

Jarvis. (*Pulling out bills.*) A few of our usual cards of compliment, that's all. This bill from your tailor; this from your mercer; and this from the little broker in Crooked Lane. He says he has been at a great deal of trouble to get back the money you borrowed.

Honeywood. That I don't know; but I'm more sure we were at a great deal of trouble in getting him to lend it.

Jarvis. He has lost all patience.

Honeywood. Then he has lost a very good thing.

Jarvis. There's that ten guineas you were sending to the poor gentleman and his children in the Fleet. I believe that would stop his mouth, for a while at least.

Honeywood. Ay, Jarvis, but what will fill their mouths in the meantime?

T. H. WILSON.

Jarvis. A few of our usual cards of compliment, that's all. This bill from your tailor, this from your mercer; and this from the little broker in Crooked Lane. He says he has been at a great deal of trouble to get back the money you borrowed.

Honeywood. That I don't know; but I'm more sure we were at a great deal of trouble in getting him to lend it.

Act I. Scene I.

Must I be cruel because he happens to be importunate; and, to relieve his avarice, leave them to insupportable distress?

Jarvis. Sir, the question now is, how to relieve yourself—yourself. Haven't I reason to be out of my senses, when I see things going at sixes and sevens?

Honeywood. Whatever reason you may have for being out of your senses, I hope you'll allow that I'm not quite unreasonable for continuing in mine.

Jarvis. You're the only man alive in your present situation that could do so. Everything upon the waste. There's Miss Richland and her fine fortune gone already, and upon the point of being given to your rival.

Honeywood. I'm no man's rival.

Jarvis. Your uncle in Italy preparing to disinherit you; your own fortune almost spent; and nothing but pressing creditors, false friends, and a pack of drunken servants that your kindness has made unfit for any other family.

Honeywood. Then they have the more occasion for being in mine.

Jarvis. So! What will you have done with him that I caught stealing your plate in the pantry? In the fact; I caught him in the fact.

Honeywood. In the fact? If so, I really think that we should pay him his wages, and turn him off.

Jarvis. He shall be turned off at Tyburn, the dog; we'll hang him, if it be only to frighten the rest of the family.

Honeywood. No, Jarvis; it's enough that we have lost what he has stolen; let us not add to it the loss of a fellow-creature.

Jarvis. Very fine; well, here was the footman just now, to complain of the butler; he says he does most work, and ought to have most wages.

Honeywood. That's but just: though perhaps here comes the butler to complain of the footman.

Jarvis. Ay, it's the way with them all, from the scullion to the privy-councillor. If they have a bad master, they keep quarrelling with him; if they have a good master, they keep quarrelling with one another.

Enter BUTLER, *drunk.*

Butler. Sir, I'll not stay in the family with Jonathan: you must part with him, or part with me—that's the ex-ex-position of the matter, sir.

Honeywood. Full and explicit enough. But what's his fault, good Philip?

Butler. Sir, he's given to drinking, sir, and I shall have my morals corrupted, by keeping such company.

Honeywood. Ha! ha! he has such a diverting way——

Jarvis. Oh! quite amusing.

Butler. I find my wines a-going, sir; and liquors don't go without mouths, sir; I hate a drunkard, sir.

Honeywood. Well, well, Philip, I'll hear you upon that another time, so go to bed now.

Jarvis. To bed! Let him go to——

Butler. Begging your honour's pardon, and begging your pardon, master Jarvis, I'll not go to bed. I have enough to do to mind my cellar. I forgot, your honour, Mr. Croaker is below. I came on purpose to tell you.

Honeywood. Why didn't you show him up, blockhead?

Butler. Show him up, sir? With all my heart, sir. Up or down, all's one to me. (*Exit.*)

Jarvis. Ay, we have one or other of that family in this house from morning till night. He comes on the old affair, I suppose; the match between his son, that's just returned from Paris, and Miss Richland, the young lady he's guardian to.

Honeywood. Perhaps so. Mr. Croaker, knowing my friendship for the young lady, has got it into his head that I can persuade her to what I please.

Jarvis. Ah! if you loved yourself but half as well as she loves you, we should soon see a marriage that would set all things to rights again.

Honeywood. Love me! Sure, Jarvis, you dream. No, no; her intimacy with me never amounted to more than mere friendship—mere friendship. That she is the most lovely woman that ever warmed the human heart, I own. But never let me harbour a thought of making her unhappy, by a connection with one so unworthy her merits, as I am. No, Jarvis; it shall be my study to serve her, even in spite of my wishes; and to secure her happiness, though it destroys my own.

Jarvis. Was ever the like? I want patience.

Honeywood. Besides, Jarvis, though I could obtain Miss Richland's consent, do you think I could succeed with her guardian, or Mrs. Croaker his wife; who, though both very fine in their way, are yet a little opposite in their dispositions, you know?

Jarvis. Opposite enough; the very reverse of each other; she all laugh and no joke, he always complaining and never sorrowful; a fretful, poor soul, that has a new distress for every hour in the four-and-twenty——

Honeywood. Hush, hush, he's coming up! he'll hear you.

Jarvis. One whose voice is a passing-bell——

Honeywood. Well, well, go, do.

Jarvis. A raven that bodes nothing but mischief; a coffin and cross-bones; a bundle of rue; a sprig of deadly nightshade; a——(HONEYWOOD, *stopping his mouth, at last pushes him off*). (*Exit* JARVIS.)

Honeywood. I must own, my old monitor is not entirely wrong. There is something in my friend Croaker's conversation that quite depresses me. His very mirth is an antidote to all gaiety, and his appearance has a stronger effect on my spirits than an undertaker's shop.—Mr. Croaker, this is such a satisfaction——

Enter CROAKER.

Croaker. A pleasant morning to Mr. Honeywood, and many of them. How is this? You look most shockingly to-day, my dear friend. I hope this weather does not affect your spirits. To be sure, if this weather continues—I say nothing—but may we be all better this day three months.

Honeywood. I heartily concur in the wish, though I own, not in your apprehensions.

Croaker. Maybe not. Indeed, what signifies what weather we have, in a country going to ruin like ours? Taxes rising and trade falling. Money flying out of the kingdom and Jesuits swarming into it. I know at this time no less than a hundred and twenty-seven Jesuits between Charing Cross and Temple Bar.

Honeywood. The Jesuits will scarcely pervert you or me, I should hope?

Croaker. Maybe not. Indeed, what signifies whom they pervert in a country that has scarce any religion to lose? I'm only afraid of our wives and daughters.

Honeywood. I have no apprehensions for the ladies, I assure you.

Croaker. Maybe not. Indeed, what signifies whether they be perverted or not? The women in my time were good for something. I have seen a lady dressed from top to toe in her own manufactures formerly. But now-a-days there's not a thing of their own manufacture about them, except their faces.

Honeywood. But, however these faults may be practised abroad, you don't find them at home, either with Mrs. Croaker, Olivia, or Miss Richland.

Croaker. The best of them will never be canonised for a saint when she's dead. By-the-by, my dear friend, I don't find this match between Miss Richland and my son much relished, either by one side or t'other.

Honeywood. I thought otherwise.

Croaker. Ah! Mr. Honeywood, a little of your fine serious advice to the young lady might go far: I know she has a very exalted opinion of your understanding.

Honeywood. But would not that be usurping an authority that more properly belongs to yourself?

Croaker. My dear friend, you know but little of my authority at home. People think, indeed, because they see me come out in a morning thus, with a pleasant face, and to make my friends merry, that all's well within. But I have cares that would break a heart of stone. My wife has so encroached upon every one of my privileges, that I'm now no more than a mere lodger in my own house.

Honeywood But a little spirit exerted on your side might perhaps restore your authority.

Croaker. No, though I had the spirit of a lion. I do rouse sometimes But what then? always haggling and haggling. A man is tired of getting the better, before his wife is tired of losing the victory.

Honeywood. It's a melancholy consideration indeed, that our chief comforts often produce our greatest anxieties, and that an increase of our possessions is but an inlet to new disquietudes.

Croaker. Ah, my dear friend, these were the very words of Poor Dick Doleful to me not a week before he made away with himself. Indeed, Mr. Honeywood, I never see you but you put me in mind of poor Dick. Ah, there was merit

neglected for you! and so true a friend; we loved each other for thirty years, and yet he never asked me to lend him a single farthing.

Honeywood. Pray, what could induce him to commit so rash an action at last?

Croaker. I don't know; some people were malicious enough to say it was keeping company with me; because we used to meet, now and then, and open our hearts to each other. To be sure, I loved to hear him talk, and he loved to hear me talk. Poor dear Dick! He used to say that Croaker rhymed to joker; and so we used to laugh—Poor Dick! (*Going to cry.*)

Honeywood. His fate affects me.

Croaker. Ay, he grew sick of this miserable life, where we do nothing but eat and grow hungry, dress and undress, get up and lie down; while reason, that should watch like a nurse by our side, falls as fast asleep as we do.

Honeywood. To say a truth, if we compare that part of life which is to come, by that which we have passed, the prospect is hideous.

Croaker. Life at the greatest and best is but a froward child, that must be humoured and coaxed a little till it falls asleep, and then all the care is over.

Honeywood. Very true, sir; nothing can exceed the vanity of our existence but the folly of our pursuits. We wept when we came into the world, and every day tells us why.

Croaker. Ah, my dear friend, it is a perfect satisfaction to be miserable with you. My son Leontine shan't lose the benefit of such fine conversation. I'll just step home for him. I am willing to show him so much seriousness in one scarce older than himself. And what if I bring my last letter to the *Gazetteer* on the increase and progress of earthquakes? It will amuse us, I promise you. I there prove how the late earthquake is coming round to pay us another visit from London to Lisbon, from Lisbon to the Canary Islands, from the Canary Islands to Palmyra, from Palmyra to Constantinople, and so from Constantinople back to London again. (*Exit.*)

Honeywood. Poor Croaker! His situation deserves the utmost pity. I shall scarce recover my spirits these three days. Sure, to live upon such terms is worse than death itself. And yet, when I consider my own situation: a broken fortune, a hopeless passion, friends in distress; the wish but not the power to serve them. (*Pausing and sighing.*)

Enter BUTLER.

Butler. More company below, sir; Mrs. Croaker and Miss Richland. Shall I show them up? But they're showing up themselves. (*Exit.*)

Enter MRS. CROAKER *and* MISS RICHLAND.

Miss Rich. You're always in such spirits.

Mrs. Croaker. We have just come, my dear Honeywood, from the auction. There was the old deaf dowager, as usual, bidding like a fury against herself: and then so curious in antiques! herself the most genuine piece of antiquity in the whole collection.

Honeywood. Excuse me, ladies, if some uneasiness from friendship makes me unfit to share in this good humour: I know you'll pardon me.

Mrs. Croaker. I vow, he seems as melancholy as if he had taken a dose of my husband this morning. Well, if Richland here can pardon you, I must.

Miss Rich. You would seem to insinuate, madam, that I have particular reasons for being disposed to refuse it.

Mrs. Croaker. Whatever I insinuate, my dear, don't be so ready to wish an explanation.

Miss Rich. I own I should be sorry Mr. Honeywood's long friendship and mine should be misunderstood.

Honeywood. There's no answering for others, madam; but I hope you'll never find me presuming to offer more than the most delicate friendship may readily allow.

Miss Rich. And I shall be prouder of such a tribute from you, than the most passionate professions from others.

Honeywood. My own sentiments, madam: friendship is a disinterested commerce between equals; love, an abject intercourse between tyrants and slaves.

Miss Rich. And, without a compliment, I know none more disinterested or more capable of friendship than Mr. Honeywood.

Mrs. Croaker. And, indeed, I know nobody that has more friends—at least, among the ladies. Miss Fruzz, Miss Oddbody, and Miss Winterbottom praise him in all companies. As for Miss Biddy Bundle, she's his professed admirer.

Miss Rich. Indeed! an admirer! I did not know, sir, you were such a favourite there. But is she seriously so handsome? Is she the mighty thing talked of?

Honeywood. The town, madam, seldom begins to praise a lady's beauty till she's beginning to lose it. (*Smiling.*)

Mrs. Croaker. But she's resolved never to lose it, it seems; for as her natural face decays, her skill improves in making the artificial one. Well, nothing diverts me more than one of those fine old dressy things, who thinks to conceal her age by everywhere exposing her person; sticking herself up in the front of a side box; trailing through a minuet at Almack's; and then, in the public gardens, looking for all the world like one of the painted ruins of the place.

Honeywood. Every age has its admirers, ladies. While you, perhaps, are trading among the warmer climates of youth, there ought to be some to carry on a useful commerce in the frozen latitudes beyond fifty.

Miss Rich. But then the mortifications they must suffer before they can be fitted out for traffic! I have seen one of them fret a whole morning at her hair-dresser, when all the fault was her face.

Honeywood. And yet, I'll engage, has carried that face at last to a very good market. This good-natured town, madam, has husbands, like spectacles, to fit every age, from fifteen to fourscore.

Mrs. Croaker. Well, you're a dear, good-natured creature. But you know

you're engaged with us this morning upon a strolling party. I want to show Olivia the town, and the things; I believe I shall have business for you for the whole day.

Honeywood. I am sorry, madam, I have an appointment with Mr. Croaker, which it is impossible to put off.

Mrs. Croaker. What! with my husband? Then I'm resolved to take no refusal. Nay, I protest you must. You know I never laugh so much as with you.

Honeywood. Why, if I must, I must. I'll swear, you have put me into such spirits. Well, do you find jest, and I'll find laugh, I promise you. We'll wait for the chariot in the next room. (*Exeunt.*)

Enter LEONTINE *and* OLIVIA.

Leont. There they go, thoughtless and happy, my dearest Olivia. What would I give to see you capable of sharing their amusements, and as cheerful as they are!

Olivia. How, my Leontine, how can I be cheerful, when I have so many terrors to oppress me? The fear of being detected by this family, and the apprehensions of a censuring world, when I must be detected——

Leont. The world! my love, what can it say? At worst, it can only say that, being compelled by a mercenary guardian to embrace a life you disliked, you formed a resolution of flying with the man of your choice; that you confided in his honour, and took refuge in my father's house; the only one where yours could remain without censure.

Olivia. But consider, Leontine, your disobedience and my indiscretion: your being sent to France to bring home a sister, and, instead of a sister, bringing home——

Leont. One dearer than a thousand sisters; one that I am convinced will be equally dear to the rest of the family, when she comes to be known.

Olivia. And that, I fear, will shortly be.

Leont. Impossible, till we ourselves think proper to make the discovery. My sister, you know, has been with her aunt, at Lyons, since she was a child; and you find every creature in the family takes you for her.

Olivia. But mayn't she write? mayn't her aunt write?

Leont. Her aunt scarce ever writes, and all my sister's letters are directed to me.

Olivia. But won't your refusing Miss Richland, for whom you know the old gentleman intends you, create a suspicion?

Leont. There, there's my master-stroke. I have resolved not to refuse her: nay, an hour hence I have consented to go with my father, to make her an offer of my heart and fortune.

Olivia. Your heart and fortune!

Leont. Don't be alarmed, my dearest. Can Olivia think so meanly of my honour, or my love, as to suppose I could ever hope for happiness from any

T.H. WILSON

Honeywood. I am sorry, madam, I have an appointment with Mr. Croaker, which it is impossible to put off.

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J. COOK SC.

Act I. Scene ..

but her? No, my Olivia, neither the force, nor, permit me to add, the delicacy of my passion, leaves any room to suspect me. I only offer Miss Richland a heart I am convinced she will refuse; as I am confident that, without knowing it, her affections are fixed upon Mr. Honeywood.

Olivia. Mr. Honeywood! You'll excuse my apprehensions, but when your merits come to be put in the balance——

Leont. You view them with too much partiality. However, by making this offer, I show a seeming compliance with my father's command; and perhaps, upon her refusal, I may have his consent to choose for myself.

Olivia. Well, I submit. And yet, my Leontine, I own I shall envy her even your pretended addresses. I consider every look, every expression of your esteem, as due only to me. This is folly, perhaps—I allow it; but it is natural to suppose, that merit which has made an impression on one's own heart may be powerful over that of another.

Leont. Don't, my life's treasure, don't let us make imaginary evils, when you know we have so many real ones to encounter. At worst, you know, if Miss Richland should consent, or my father refuse his pardon, it can but end in a trip to Scotland; and——

Enter CROAKER.

Croaker. Where have you been, boy? I have been seeking you. My friend Honeywood here has been saying such comfortable things. Ah! he's an example indeed. Where is he? I left him here.

Leont. Sir, I believe you may see him, and hear him too, in the next room: he's preparing to go out with the ladies.

Croaker. Good gracious! can I believe my eyes or my ears? I'm struck dumb with his vivacity, and stunned with the loudness of his laugh. Was there ever such a transformation? (*A laugh behind the scenes;* CROAKER *mimics it.*) Ha! ha! ha! there it goes; a plague take their balderdash! Yet I could expect nothing less, when my precious wife was of the party. On my conscience, I believe she could spread a horse-laugh through the pews of a tabernacle.

Leont. Since you find so many objections to a wife, sir, how can you be so earnest in recommending one to me?

Croaker. I have told you, and tell you again, boy, that Miss Richland's fortune must not go out of the family; one may find comfort in the money whatever one does in the wife.

Leont. But, sir, though, in obedience to your desire, I am ready to marry her, it may be possible she has no inclination to me.

Croaker. I'll tell you once for all how it stands. A good part of Miss Richland's large fortune consists in a claim upon Government, which my good friend, Mr. Lofty, assures me the Treasury will allow. One half of this she is to forfeit, by her father's will, in case she refuses to marry you. So if she rejects you, we seize half her fortune; if she accepts you, we seize the whole, and a fine girl into the bargain.

Leont. But, sir, if you will but listen to reason——

Croaker. Come, then, produce your reasons. I tell you I'm fixed—determined, so now produce your reasons. When I'm determined I always listen to reason, because it can then do no harm.

Leont. You have alleged that a mutual choice was the first requisite in matrimonial happiness——

Croaker. Well, and you have both of you a mutual choice. She has her choice—to marry you, or lose half her fortune; and you have your choice—to marry her, or pack out of doors without any fortune at all.

Leont. An only son, sir, might expect more indulgence.

Croaker. An only father, sir, might expect more obedience. Besides, has not your sister here, that never disobliged me in her life, as good a right as you? He's a sad dog, Livy, my dear, and would take all from you. But he shan't, I tell you he shan't, for you shall have your share.

Olivia. Dear sir, I wish you'd be convinced that I can never be happy in any addition to my fortune which is taken from his.

Croaker. Well, well, it's a good child; so say no more, but come with me, and we shall see something that will give us a great deal of pleasure, I promise you—old Ruggins, the curry-comb maker, lying in state. I'm told he makes a very handsome corpse, and becomes his coffin prodigiously. He was an intimate friend of mine, and these are friendly things we ought to do for each other. (*Exeunt.*)

ACT II.

SCENE I.—CROAKER'S *House.*

MISS RICHLAND, GARNET.

Miss Rich. Olivia not his sister? Olivia not Leontine's sister? You amaze me.

Garnet. No more his sister than I am. I had it all from his own servant; I can get anything from that quarter.

Miss Rich. But how? Tell me again, Garnet.

Garnet. Why, madam, as I told you before, instead of going to Lyons to bring home his sister, who has been there with her aunt these ten years, he never went farther than Paris; there he saw and fell in love with this young lady: by-the-by, of a prodigious family.

Miss Rich. And brought her home to my guardian, as his daughter?

Garnet. Yes, and daughter she will be. If he don't consent to their marriage, they talk of trying what a Scotch parson can do.

Miss Rich. Well, I own they have deceived me: and so demurely as Olivia

carried it, too! Would you believe it, Garnet, I told her all my secrets; and yet the sly cheat concealed all this from me.

Garnet. And, upon my word, madam, I don't much blame her; she was loth to trust one with her secrets, that was so very bad at keeping her own.

Miss Rich. But, to add to their deceit, the young gentleman, it seems, pretends to make me serious proposals. My guardian and he are to be here presently, to open the affair in form. You know, I am to lose half my fortune if I refuse him.

Garnet. Yet what can you do? for being, as you are, in love with Mr. Honeywood, madam——

Miss Rich. How, idiot! what do you mean? In love with Mr. Honeywood! Is this to provoke me?

Garnet. That is, madam, in friendship with him: I meant nothing more than friendship, as I hope to be married; nothing more.

Miss Rich. Well, no more of this. As to my guardian and his son, they shall find me prepared to receive them. I'm resolved to accept their proposal with seeming pleasure, to mortify them by compliance, and so throw the refusal at last upon them.

Garnet. Delicious! and that will secure your whole fortune to yourself. Well, who could have thought so innocent a face could cover so much cuteness?

Miss Rich. Why, girl, I only oppose my prudence to their cunning, and practise a lesson they have taught me against themselves.

Garnet. Then you're likely not long to want employment; for here they come, and in close conference.

Enter CROAKER, LEONTINE.

Leont. Excuse me, sir, if I seem to hesitate upon the point of putting to the lady so important a question.

Croaker. Good sir, moderate your fears; you're so plaguy shy, that one would think you had changed sexes. I tell you, we must have the half or the whole. Come, let me see with what spirit you begin. Well, why don't you? Eh? What? Well, then, I must, it seems. Miss Richland, my dear, I believe you guess at our business; an affair which my son comes here to open, that nearly concerns your happiness.

Miss Rich. Sir, I should be ungrateful not to be pleased with anything that comes recommended by you.

Croaker. How, boy, could you desire a finer opening? Why don't you begin, I say? (*To* LEONT.)

Leont. 'Tis true, madam, my father, madam, has some intentions—hem—of explaining an affair—which—himself—can best explain, madam.

Croaker. Yes, my dear; it comes entirely from my son: it's all a request of his own, madam. And I will permit him to make the best of it.

Leont. The whole affair is only this, madam: my father has a proposal to make, which he insists none but himself shall deliver.

Garnet. Delicious! and that will secure your whole fortune to yourself. Well, who could have thought so innocent a face could cover so much cuteness? *Act II. Scene I.*

Croaker. My mind misgives me, the fellow will never be brought on. (*Aside.*) In short, madam, you see before you one that loves you—one whose whole happiness is all in you.

Miss Rich. I never had any doubts of your regard, sir; and I hope you can have none of my duty.

Croaker. That's not the thing, my little sweeting, my love. No, no. another-guess lover than I. There he stands, madam. His very looks declare the force of his passion——Call up a look, you dog——But then, had you seen him, as I have, weeping, speaking soliloquies and blank verse, sometimes melancholy and sometimes absent——

Miss Rich. I fear, sir, he's absent now; or such a declaration would have come most properly from himself.

Croaker. Himself, madam! He would die before he could make such a confession; and if he had not a channel for his passion through me, it would ere now have drowned his understanding.

Miss Rich. I must grant, sir, there are attractions in modest diffidence above the force of words. A silent address is the genuine eloquence of sincerity.

Croaker. There he stands, madam. His very looks declare the force of his passion —Call up a look, you dog—But then, had you seen him, as I have, weeping, speaking soliloquies and blank verse, sometimes melancholy and sometimes absent— *Act II. Scene I.*

Croaker. Madam, he has forgot to speak any other language; silence is become his mother-tongue.

Miss Rich. And it must be confessed, sir, it speaks very powerfully in his favour. And yet, I shall be thought too forward in making such a confession, shan't I, Mr. Leontine?

Leont. Confusion! my reserve will undo me. But, if modesty attracts her, impudence may disgust her. I'll try. (*Aside.*) Don't imagine from my silence, madam, that I want a due sense of the honour and happiness intended me. My father, madam, tells me your humble servant is not totally indifferent to you. He admires you; I adore you: and when we come together, upon my soul I believe we shall be the happiest couple in all St. James's.

Miss Rich. If I could flatter myself you thought as you speak, sir——

Leont. Doubt my sincerity, madam? By your dear self I swear. Ask the brave if they desire glory, ask cowards if they covet safety——

Croaker. Well, well, no more questions about it.

Leont. Ask the sick if they long for health, ask misers if they love money, ask——

Croaker. Ask a fool if he can talk nonsense! What's come over the boy?

What signifies asking, when there's not a soul to give you an answer? If you would ask to the purpose, ask this lady's consent to make you happy.

Miss Rich. Why, indeed, sir, his uncommon ardour almost compels me, forces me, to comply. And yet, I'm afraid he'll despise a conquest gained with too much ease, won't you, Mr. Leontine?

Leont. Confusion! (*Aside.*) Oh, by no means, madam—by no means And yet, madam, you talked of force. There is nothing I would avoid so much as compulsion in a thing of this kind. No, madam; I will still be generous, and leave you at liberty to refuse.

Croaker. But I tell you, sir, the lady is not at liberty. It's a match. You see she says nothing. Silence gives consent.

Leont. But, sir, she talked of force. Consider, sir, the cruelty of constraining her inclinations.

Croaker. But I say there's no cruelty. Don't you know, blockhead, that girls have always a round-about way of saying Yes before company? So get you both gone together into the next room, and hang him that interrupts the tender explanation. Get you gone, I say; I'll not hear a word.

Leont. But, sir, I must beg leave to insist——

Croaker. Get off, you puppy, or I'll beg leave to insist upon knocking you down. Stupid whelp! But I don't wonder; the boy takes entirely after his mother. (*Exeunt* MISS RICHLAND *and* LEONTINE.)

Enter MRS. CROAKER.

Mrs. Croaker. Mr. Croaker, I bring you something, my dear, that I believe will make you smile.

Croaker. I'll hold you a guinea of that, my dear.

Mrs. Croaker. A letter; and, as I knew the hand, I ventured to open it.

Croaker. And how can you expect your breaking open my letters should give me pleasure?

Mrs. Croaker. Pooh, it's from your sister at Lyons, and contains good news: read it.

Croaker. What a Frenchified cover is here! That sister of mine has some good qualities, but I could never teach her to fold a letter.

Mrs. Croaker. Fold a fiddlestick! Read what it contains.

Croaker. (*Reading.*)

DEAR NICK,—

An English gentleman, of large fortune, has for some time made private, though honourable, proposals to your daughter Olivia. They love each other tenderly, and I find she has consented, without letting any of the family know, to crown his addresses. As such good offers don't come every day, your own good sense, his large fortune, and family considerations, will induce you to forgive her. Yours ever,

RACHEL CROAKER.

My daughter Olivia privately contracted to a man of large fortune! This is good news indeed. My heart never foretold me of this. And yet, how slily

the little baggage has carried it since she came home! Not a word on't to the old ones, for the world! Yet I thought I saw something she wanted to conceal.

Mrs. Croaker. Well, if they have concealed their love-making, they shan't conceal their wedding; that shall be public, I'm resolved.

Croaker. I tell thee, woman, the wedding is the most foolish part of the ceremony. I can never get this woman to think of the more serious part of the nuptial engagement.

Mrs. Croaker. What! would you have me think of their funeral? But come, tell me, my dear, don't you owe more to me than you care to confess? Would you have ever been known to Mr. Lofty, who has undertaken Miss Richland's claim at the Treasury, but for me? Who was it first made him an acquaintance at Lady Shabbaroon's rout? Who got him to promise us his interest? Is not he a back-stairs favourite, one that can do what he pleases with those that do what they please? Isn't he an acquaintance that all your groaning and lamentations could never have got us?

Croaker. He is a man of importance, I grant you; and yet, what amazes me is, that while he is giving away places to all the world, he can't get one for himself.

Mrs. Croaker. That, perhaps, may be owing to his nicety. Great men are not easily satisfied.

Enter French Servant.

Servant. An expresse from Monsieur Lofty. He vil be vait upon your honours instammant. He be only giving four five instruction, read two tree memorial, call upon von ambassadeur. He vil be vid you in one tree minutes.

Mrs. Croaker. You see now, my dear, what an extensive department. Well, friend, let your master know that we are extremely honoured by this honour. Was there anything ever in a higher style of breeding? All messages among the great are now done by express.

Croaker. To be sure, no man does little things with more solemnity, or claims more respect, than he. But he's in the right on't. In our bad world, respect is given where respect is claimed.

Mrs. Croaker. Never mind the world, my dear; you were never in a pleasanter place in your life. Let us now think of receiving him with proper respect (*a loud rapping at the door*): and there he is, by the thundering rap.

Croaker. Ay, verily, there he is; as close upon the heels of his own express as an indorsement upon the back of a bill. Well, I'll leave you to receive him, whilst I go to chide my little Olivia for intending to steal a marriage without mine or her aunt's consent. I must seem to be angry, or she too may begin to despise my authority. (*Exit.*)

Enter LOFTY, *speaking to his Servant.*

Lofty. And if the Venetian ambassador, or that teasing creature the marquis, should call, I'm not at home. I'll be packhorse to none of them.

Lofty. Madam, I ask a thousand pardons.
Mrs. Croaker. Sir, this honour——

Act II. Scene I.

My dear madam, I have just snatched a moment. And if the expresses to his grace be ready, let them be sent off; they're of importance. Madam, I ask a thousand pardons.

Mrs. Croaker. Sir, this honour——

Lofty. And, Dubardieu, if the person calls about the commission, let him know that it is made out. As for Lord Cumbercourt's stale request, it can keep cold: you understand me. Madam, I ask ten thousand pardons.

Mrs. Croaker. Sir, this honour——

Lofty. And, Dubardieu, if the man comes from the Cornish borough, you must do him; you must do him, I say. Madam, I ask ten thousand pardons. And if the Russian ambassador calls—but he will scarce call to-day, I believe. And now, madam, I have just got time to express my happiness in having the honour of being permitted to profess myself your most obedient humble servant.

Mrs. Croaker. Sir, the happiness and honour are all mine. And yet, I'm only robbing the public while I detain you.

Lofty. Sink the public, madam, when the fair are to be attended. Ah! could all my hours be so charmingly devoted! Sincerely, don't you pity us poor creatures in affairs? Thus it is eternally: solicited for places here, teased for pensions there, and courted everywhere. I know you pity me. Yes, I see you do.

Mrs. Croaker. Excuse me, sir. "Toils of empires pleasures are," as Waller says.

Lofty. Waller! Waller! Is he of the house?

Mrs. Croaker. The modern poet of that name, sir.

Lofty. Oh, a modern! We men of business despise the moderns; and as for the ancients, we have no time to read them. Poetry is a pretty thing enough for our wives and daughters; but not for us. Why now, here I stand that know nothing of books—I say, madam, I know nothing of books; and yet, I believe, upon a land-carriage fishery, a stamp-act, or a jaghire, I can talk my two hours without feeling the want of them.

Mrs. Croaker. The world is no stranger to Mr. Lofty's eminence in every capacity.

Lofty. I vow, madam, you make me blush. I'm nothing, nothing, nothing, in the world; a mere obscure gentleman. To be sure, indeed, one or two of the present ministers are pleased to represent me as a formidable man. I know they are pleased to bespatter me at all their little dirty *levees*. Yet, upon my soul, I wonder what they see in me to treat me so. Measures, not men, have always been my mark; and I vow, by all that's honourable, my resentment has never done the men, as mere men, any manner of harm—that is, as mere men.

Mrs. Croaker. What importance, and yet what modesty!

Lofty. Oh, if you talk of modesty, madam, there, I own, I'm accessible to praise: modesty is my foible; it was so, the Duke of Brentford used to say of

me. "I love Jack Lofty," he used to say: "no man has a finer knowledge of things—quite a man of information; and when he speaks upon his legs, he's prodigious; he scouts them. And yet, all men have their faults: too much modesty is his," says his grace.

Mrs. Croaker. And yet, I dare say, you don't want assurance when you come to solicit for your friends.

Lofty. Oh, there indeed I'm in bronze. Apropos, I have just been mentioning Miss Richland's case to a certain personage—we must name no names. When I ask, I am not to be put off, madam. No, no, I take my friend by the button. "A fine girl, sir; great justice in her case. A friend of mine. Borough-interest. Business must be done, Mr. Secretary. I say, Mr. Secretary, her business must be done, sir." That's my way, madam.

Mrs. Croaker. Bless me! you said all this to the Secretary of State, did you?

Lofty. I did not say the Secretary, did I? Well, since you have found me out, I will not deny it. It was to the Secretary.

Mrs. Croaker. This was going to the fountain-head at once; not applying to the understrappers, as Mr. Honeywood would have had us.

Lofty. Honeywood! he! he! He was, indeed, a fine solicitor. I suppose you have heard what has just happened to him?

Mrs. Croaker. Poor, dear man! no accident, I hope?

Lofty. Undone, madam, that's all. His creditors have taken him into custody. A prisoner in his own house.

Mrs. Croaker. A prisoner in his own house! How? At this very time? I'm quite unhappy for him.

Lofty. Why, so am I. The man, to be sure, was immensely good-natured; but then, I could never find that he had anything in him.

Mrs. Croaker. His manner, to be sure, was excessively harmless—some, indeed, thought it a little dull. For my part, I always concealed my opinion.

Lofty. It can't be concealed, madam; the man was dull—dull as the last new comedy! A poor, impracticable creature! I tried once or twice to know if he was fit for business, but he had scarce talents to be groom-porter to an orange-barrow.

Mrs. Croaker. How differently does Miss Richland think of him! for I believe, with all his faults, she loves him.

Lofty. Loves him! Does she? You should cure her of that, by all means. Let me see: what if she were sent to him this instant, in his present doleful situation? My life for it, that works her cure. Distress is a perfect antidote to love. Suppose we join her in the next room? Miss Richland is a fine girl, has a fine fortune, and must not be thrown away. Upon my honour, madam, I have a regard for Miss Richland; and, rather than she should be thrown away, I should think it no indignity to marry her myself. (*Exeunt.*)

Enter OLIVIA *and* LEONTINE.

Leont. And yet, trust me, Olivia, I had every reason to expect Miss

Richland's refusal, as I did everything in my power to deserve it. Her indelicacy surprises me.

Olivia. Sure, Leontine, there's nothing so indelicate in being sensible of your merit. If so, I fear I shall be the most guilty thing alive.

Leont. But you mistake, my dear. The same attention I used to advance my merit with you, I practised to lessen it with her. What more could I do?

Olivia. Let us now rather consider what's to be done. We have both dissembled too long. I have always been ashamed, I am now quite weary of it. Sure, I could never have undergone so much for any other but you.

Leont. And you shall find my gratitude equal to your kindest compliance. Though our friends should totally forsake us, Olivia, we can draw upon content for the deficiencies of fortune.

Olivia. Then why should we defer our scheme of humble happiness, when it is now in our power? I may be the favourite of your father, it is true; but can it ever be thought that his present kindness to a supposed child will continue to a known deceiver?

Leont. I have many reasons to believe it will. As his attachments are but few, they are lasting. His own marriage was a private one, as ours may be. Besides, I have sounded him already at a distance, and find all his answers exactly to our wish. Nay, by an expression or two that dropped from him, I am induced to think he knows of this affair.

Olivia. Indeed! but that would be a happiness too great to be expected.

Leont. However it be, I'm certain you have power over him; and am persuaded, if you informed him of our situation, that he would be disposed to pardon it.

Olivia. You had equal expectations, Leontine, from your last scheme with Miss Richland, which you find has succeeded most wretchedly.

Leont. And that's the best reason for trying another.

Olivia. If it must be so, I submit.

Leont. As we could wish, he comes this way. Now, my dearest Olivia, be resolute. I'll just retire within hearing, to come in at a proper time, either to share your danger or confirm your victory. (*Exit.*)

Enter CROAKER.

Croaker. Yes, I must forgive her; and yet not too easily, neither. It will be proper to keep up the decorums of resentment a little, if it be only to impress her with an idea of my authority.

Olivia. How I tremble to approach him! Might I presume, sir,—if I interrupt you——

Croaker. No, child; where I have an affection, it is not a little thing can interrupt me. Affection gets over little things.

Olivia. Sir, you're too kind. I'm sensible how ill I deserve this partiality. Yet there is nothing I would not do to gain it.

Croaker. And you have but too well succeeded, you little hussy, you. With

those endearing ways of yours, on my conscience, I could be brought to forgive anything, unless it were a very great offence indeed.

Olivia. But mine is such an offence. When you know my guilt——Yes, you shall know it, though I feel the greatest pain in the confession.

Croaker. Why, then, if it be so very great a pain, you may spare yourself the trouble, for I know every syllable of the matter before you begin.

Olivia. Indeed! Then I'm undone.

Croaker. Ay, miss, you wanted to steal a match, without letting me know it, did you? But I'm not worth being consulted, I suppose, when there's to be a marriage in my own family. No, I'm nobody. I'm to be a mere article of family lumber; a piece of crack'd china to be stuck up in a corner.

Olivia. Dear sir, nothing but the dread of your authority could induce us to conceal it from you.

Croaker. No, no, my consequence is no more; I'm as little minded as a dead Russian in winter, just stuck up with a pipe in its mouth till there comes a thaw——It goes to my heart to vex her. (*Aside.*)

Olivia. I was prepared, sir, for your anger, and despaired of pardon, even while I presumed to ask it. But your severity shall never abate my affection, as my punishment is but justice.

Croaker. And yet you should not despair neither, Livy. We ought to hope all for the best.

Olivia. And do you permit me to hope, sir? Can I ever expect to be forgiven? But hope has too long deceived me.

Croaker. Why, then, child, it shan't deceive you now, for I forgive you this very moment; I forgive you all; and now you are indeed my daughter.

Olivia. Oh, transport! This kindness overpowers me.

Croaker. I was always against severity to our children. We have been young and giddy ourselves, and we can't expect boys and girls to be old before their time.

Olivia. What generosity! But can you forget the many falsehoods—the dissimulation——

Croaker. You did indeed dissemble, you urchin, you; but where's the girl that won't dissemble for a husband? My wife and I had never been married, if we had not dissembled a little beforehand.

Olivia. It shall be my future care never to put such generosity to a second trial. And as for the partner of my offence and folly, from his native honour, and the just sense he has of his duty, I can answer for him that——

Enter LEONTINE.

Leont. Permit him thus to answer for himself. (*Kneeling.*) Thus, sir, let me speak my gratitude for this unmerited forgiveness. Yes, sir, this even exceeds all your former tenderness: I can now boast the most indulgent of fathers. The life he gave, compared to this, was but a trifling blessing.

Croaker. And, good sir, who sent for you, with that fine tragedy face, and

Leontine. Permit him thus to answer for himself. Thus, sir, let me speak my gratitude for this unmerited forgiveness. *Act II. Scene I.*

flourishing manner? I don't know what we have to do with your gratitude upon this occasion.

Leont. How, sir, is it possible to be silent when so much obliged? Would you refuse me the pleasure of being grateful? of adding my thanks to my Olivia's? of sharing in the transports that you have thus occasioned?

Croaker. Sir, we can be happy enough, without your coming in to make up the party. I don't know what's the matter with the boy all this day; he has got into such a rhodomontade manner all the morning!

Leont. But, sir, I that have so large a part in the benefit, is it not my duty to show my joy? Is the being admitted to your favour so slight an obligation? Is the happiness of marrying my Olivia so small a blessing?

Croaker. Marrying Olivia! marrying Olivia! marrying his own sister! Sure the boy is out of his senses! His own sister!

Leont. My sister!

Olivia. Sister! How have I been mistaken. (*Aside.*)

Leont. Some mistake in all this, I find. (*Aside.*)

Croaker. What does the booby mean, or has he any meaning? Eh? what do you mean, you blockhead, you?

Leont. Mean, sir?—why, sir—only when my sister is to be married, that I have the pleasure of marrying her, sir; that is, of giving her away, sir—I have made a point of it.

Croaker. Oh, that is all? Give her away. You have made a point of it. Then you had as good make a point of first giving away yourself, as I'm going to prepare the writings between you and Miss Richland this very minute. What a fuss is here about nothing! Why, what's the matter now? I thought I had made you at least as happy as you could wish.

Olivia. Oh! yes, sir, very happy.

Croaker. Do you foresee anything, child? You look as if you did. I think if anything was to be foreseen, I have as sharp a look-out as another; and yet I foresee nothing. (*Exit.*)

LEONTINE, OLIVIA.

Olivia. What can it mean?

Leont. He knows something, and yet for my life I can't tell what.

Olivia. It can't be the connection between us, I'm pretty certain.

Leont. Whatever it be, my dearest, I'm resolved to put it out of Fortune's power to repeat our mortification. I'll haste, and prepare for our journey to Scotland this very evening. My friend Honeywood has promised me his advice and assistance. I'll go to him, and repose our distresses on his friendly bosom: and I know so much of his honest heart, that if he can't relieve our uneasinesses, he will at least share them. (*Exeunt.*)

ACT III.

SCENE I.—YOUNG HONEYWOOD'S *House.*

BAILIFF, HONEYWOOD, FOLLOWER.

Bailiff. Look-ye, sir, I have arrested as good men as you in my time; no disparagement of you, neither. Men that would go forty guineas on a game of cribbage. I challenge the town to show a man in more genteeler practice than myself.

Honeywood. Without all question, Mr. ——. I forget your name, sir?

Bailiff. How can you forget what you never knew? He! he! he!

Honeywood. May I beg leave to ask your name?

Bailiff. Yes, you may.

Honeywood. Then, pray, sir, what is your name?

Bailiff. That I didn't promise to tell you. He! he! he! A joke breaks no bones, as we say among us that practise the law.

Honeywood. You may have reason for keeping it a secret, perhaps.

Bailiff. The law does nothing without reason. I'm ashamed to tell my name to no man, sir. If you can show cause, as why, upon a special capus, that I should prove my name.——But, come, Timothy Twitch is my name. And, now you know my name, what have you to say to that?

Honeywood. Nothing in the world, good Mr. Twitch, but that I have a favour to ask, that's all.

Bailiff. Ay, favours are more easily asked than granted, as we say among us that practise the law. I have taken an oath against granting favours. Would you have me perjure myself?

Honeywood. But my request will come recommended in so strong a manner, as, I believe, you'll have no scruple. (*Pulling out his purse.*) The thing is only this: I believe I shall be able to discharge this trifle in two or three days at farthest; but as I would not have the affair known for the world, I have thought of keeping you, and your good friend here, about me till the debt is discharged; for which I shall be properly grateful.

Bailiff. Oh! that's another maxum, and altogether within my oath. For certain, if an honest man is to get anything by a thing, there's no reason why all things should not be done in civility.

Honeywood. Doubtless, all trades must live, Mr. Twitch; and yours is a necessary one. (*Gives him money.*)

Bailiff. Oh! your honour; I hope your honour takes nothing amiss as I does, as I does nothing but my duty in so doing. I'm sure no man can say I ever give a gentleman, that was a gentleman, ill usage. If I saw that a gentleman was a gentleman, I have taken money not to see him for ten weeks together.

Honeywood. Tenderness is a virtue, Mr. Twitch.

Bailiff. There's my follower here, little Flanigan, with a wife and four children: a guinea or two would be more to him than twice as much to another. *Act III. Scene I.*

Bailiff. Ay, sir, it's a perfect treasure. I love to see a gentleman with a tender heart. I don't know, but I think I have a tender heart myself. If all that I have lost by my heart was put together, it would make a—but no matter for that.

Honeywood. Don't account it lost, Mr. Twitch. The ingratitude of the world can never deprive us of the conscious happiness of having acted with humanity ourselves.

Bailiff. Humanity, sir, is a jewel. It's better than gold. I love humanity People may say that we, in our way, have no humanity; but I'll show you my humanity this moment. There's my follower here, little Flanigan, with a wife and four children: a guinea or two would be more to him than twice as much to another. Now, as I can't show him any humanity myself, I must beg leave you'll do it for me.

Honeywood. I assure you, Mr. Twitch, yours is a most powerful recommendation. (*Giving money to the Follower.*)

Bailiff. Sir, you're a gentleman. I see you know what to do with your money. But to business: we are to be here as your friends, I suppose. But set in case company comes. Little Flanigan here, to be sure, has a good face; a very good face: but then, he is a little seedy, as we say among us that practise the law. Not well in clothes. Smoke the pocket-holes.

Honeywood. Well, that shall be remedied without delay.

Enter Servant.

Servant. Sir, Miss Richland is below.

Honeywood. How unlucky! Detain her a moment. We must improve my good friend little Mr. Flanigan's appearance first. Here, let Mr. Flanigan have a suit of my clothes—quick—the brown and silver. Do you hear?

Servant. That your honour gave away to the begging gentleman that makes verses, because it was as good as new.

Honeywood. The white and gold, then.

Servant. That, your honour, I made bold to sell, because it was good for nothing.

Honeywood. Well, the first that comes to hand, then: the blue and gold. I believe Mr. Flanigan will look best in blue. (*Exit* FLANIGAN.)

Bailiff. Rabbit me, but little Flanigan will look well in anything. Ah, if your honour knew that bit of flesh as well as I do, you'd be perfectly in love with him. There's not a prettier scout in the four counties after a shy-cock than he. Scents like a hound; sticks like a weasel. He was master of the ceremonies to the black Queen of Morocco, when I took him to follow me. (*Re-enter* FLANIGAN.) Heh, I think he looks so well, that I don't care if I have a suit from the same place for myself.

Honeywood. Well, well, I hear the lady coming. Dear Mr. Twitch, I beg you'll give your friend directions not to speak. As for yourself, I know you will say nothing without being directed.

Bailiff. Never you fear me, I'll show the lady that I have something to say for myself as well as another. One man has one way of talking, and another man has another; that's all the difference between them.

Enter MISS RICHLAND *and her* Maid.

Miss Rich. You'll be surprised, sir, with this visit. But you know I'm yet to thank you for choosing my little library.

Honeywood. Thanks, madam, are unnecessary, as it was I that was obliged by your commands. Chairs here. Two of my very good friends, Mr. Twitch and Mr. Flanigan. Pray, gentlemen, sit without ceremony.

Miss Rich. Who can these odd-looking men be? I fear it is as I was informed. It must be so. (*Aside.*)

Bailiff. (*After a pause.*) Pretty weather, very pretty weather, for the time of the year, madam.

Follower. Very good circuit weather in the country.

Honeywood. You officers are generally favourites among the ladies. My friends, madam, have been upon very disagreeable duty, I assure you. The fair should, in some measure, recompense the toils of the brave.

Miss Rich. Our officers do indeed deserve every favour. The gentlemen are in the marine service, I presume, sir?

Honeywood. Why, madam, they do—occasionally serve in the Fleet, madam: a dangerous service.

Miss Rich. I'm told so. And I own it has often surprised me that, while we have had so many instances of bravery there, we have had so few of wit at home to praise it.

Honeywood. I grant, madam, that our poets have not written as our soldiers have fought; but they have done all they could, and Hawke or Amherst could do no more.

Miss Rich. I'm quite displeased when I see a fine subject spoiled by a dull writer.

Honeywood. We should not be so severe against dull writers, madam. It is ten to one, but the dullest writer exceeds the most rigid French critic who presumes to despise him.

Follower. —— the French, the parle vous, and all that belong to them!

Miss Rich. Sir!

Honeywood. Ha! ha! ha! honest Mr. Flanigan. A true English officer, madam; he's not contented with beating the French, but he will scold them too.

Miss Rich. Yet, Mr. Honeywood, this does not convince me but that severity in criticism is necessary. It was our first adopting the severity of French taste that has brought them in turn to taste us.

Bailiff. Taste us, madam! they devour us. Give Monseers but a taste, and they come in for a bellyful.

Miss Rich. Very extraordinary, this.

Follower. But very true. What makes the bread rising?—the parle vous that devour us. What makes the mutton fivepence a pound?—the parle vous that eat it up. What makes the beer threepence-halfpenny a pot——

Honeywood. Ah! the vulgar rogues! All will be out. (*Aside.*) Right, gentlemen, very right, upon my word, and quite to the purpose. They draw a parallel, madam, between the mental taste and that of our senses. We are injured as much by French severity in the one, as by French rapacity in the other. That's their meaning.

Miss Rich. Though I don't see the force of the parallel, yet I'll own that we should sometimes pardon books, as we do our friends, that have now and then agreeable absurdities to recommend them.

Bailiff. That's all my eye. The king only can pardon, as the law says; for set in case——

Honeywood. I'm quite of your opinion, sir. I see the whole drift of your argument. Yes, certainly, our presuming to pardon any work is arrogating the power that belongs to another. If all have power to condemn, what writer can be free?

Bailiff. By his habus corpus. His habus corpus can set him free at any time. For set in case——

Honeywood. I'm obliged to you, sir, for the hint. If, madam, as my friend

observes, our laws are so careful of a gentleman's person, sure we ought to be equally careful of his dearer part, his fame.

Follower. Ay, but if so be a man's nabbed, you know——

Honeywood. Mr. Flanigan, if you spoke for ever, you could not improve the last observation. For my own part, I think it conclusive.

Bailiff. As for the matter of that, mayhap——

Honeywood. Nay, sir, give me leave in this instance to be positive. For where is the necessity of censuring works without genius, which must shortly sink of themselves? what is it, but aiming an unnecessary blow against a victim already under the hands of justice?

Bailiff. Justice! Oh, by the elevens, if you talk about justice, I think I am at home there; for, in a course of law——

Honeywood. My dear Mr. Twitch, I discern what you'd be at perfectly, and I believe the lady must be sensible of the art with which it is introduced. I suppose you perceive the meaning, madam, of his course of law?

Miss Rich. I protest, sir, I do not. I perceive only that you answer one gentleman before he has finished, and the other before he has well begun.

Bailiff. Madam, you are a gentlewoman, and I will make the matter out. This here question is about severity, and justice, and pardon, and the like of they. Now, to explain the thing——

Honeywood. Oh! —— your explanations. (*Aside.*)

Enter Servant.

Servant. Mr. Leontine, sir, below, desires to speak with you upon earnest business.

Honeywood. That's lucky. (*Aside.*) Dear madam, you'll excuse me and my good friends here for a few minutes. There are books, madam, to amuse you. Come, gentlemen, you know I make no ceremony with such friends. After you, sir. Excuse me. Well, if I must; but I know your natural politeness.

Bailiff. Before and behind, you know.

Follower. Ay, ay, before and behind—before and behind!

(*Exeunt* HONEYWOOD, BAILIFF, *and* FOLLOWER.)

Miss Rich. What can all this mean, Garnet?

Garnet. Mean, madam? why, what should it mean, but what Mr. Lofty sent you here to see? These people he calls officers are officers sure enough: sheriff's officers—bailiffs, madam.

Miss Rich. Ay, it is certainly so. Well, though his perplexities are far from giving me pleasure, yet I own there's something very ridiculous in them, and a just punishment for his dissimulation.

Garnet. And so they are. But I wonder, madam, that the lawyer you just employed to pay his debts and set him free, has not done it by this time. He ought at least to have been here before now. But lawyers are always more ready to get a man into troubles than out of them.

Enter SIR WILLIAM.

Sir Will. For Miss Richland to undertake setting him free, I own, was quite unexpected. It has totally unhinged my schemes to reclaim him. Yet it gives me pleasure to find that, among a number of worthless friendships, he has made one acquisition of real value; for there must be some softer passion on her side that prompts this generosity. Ha! here before me! I'll endeavour to sound her affections. Madam, as I am the person that have had some demands upon the gentleman of this house, I hope you'll excuse me if, before I enlarged him, I wanted to see yourself.

Miss Rich. The precaution was very unnecessary, sir. I suppose your wants were only such as my agent had power to satisfy?

Sir Will. Partly, madam. But I was also willing you should be fully apprised of the character of the gentleman you intended to serve.

Miss Rich. It must come, sir, with a very ill grace from you. To censure it, after what you have done, would look like malice; and to speak favourably of a character you have oppressed, would be impeaching your own. And sure, his tenderness, his humanity, his universal friendship, may atone for many faults.

Sir Will. That friendship, madam, which is exerted in too wide a sphere becomes totally useless. Our bounty, like a drop of water, disappears when diffused too widely. They who pretend most to this universal benevolence are either deceivers or dupes—men who desire to cover their private ill-nature by a pretended regard for all; or men who, reasoning themselves into false feelings, are more earnest in pursuit of splendid than of useful virtues.

Miss Rich. I am surprised, sir, to hear one who has probably been a gainer by the folly of others, so severe in his censure of it.

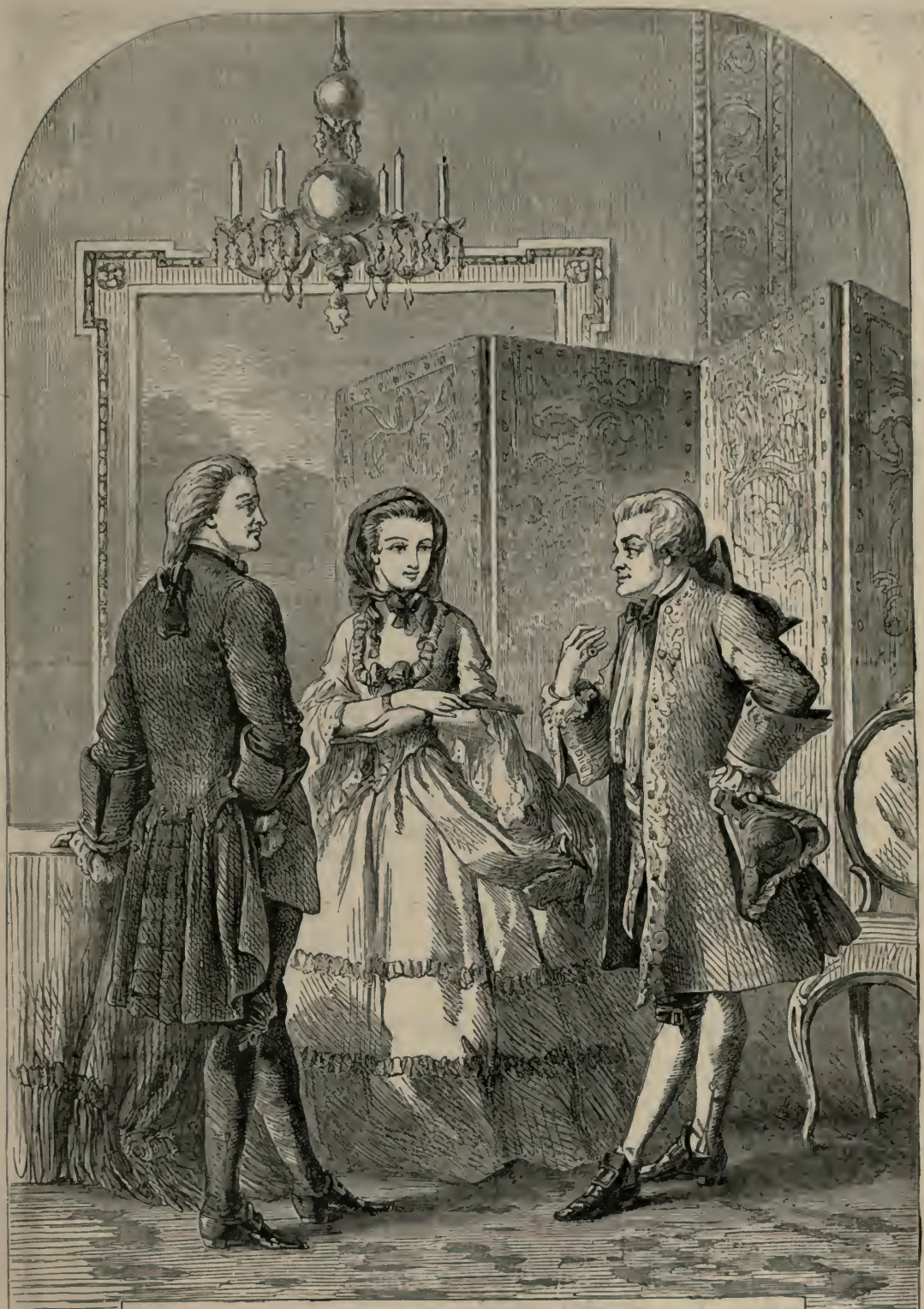
Sir Will. Whatever I may have gained by folly, madam, you see I am willing to prevent your losing by it.

Miss Rich. Your cares for me, sir, are unnecessary. I always suspect those services which are denied where they are wanted, and offered, perhaps, in hopes of a refusal. No, sir, my directions have been given, and I insist upon their being complied with.

Sir Will. Thou amiable woman! I can no longer contain the expressions of my gratitude—my pleasure. You see before you one who has been equally careful of his interest—one who has for some time been a concealed spectator of his follies, and only punished in hope to reclaim them—his uncle.

Miss Rich. Sir William Honeywood! You amaze me. How shall I conceal my confusion? I fear, sir, you'll think I have been too forward in my services. I confess I——

Sir Will. Don't make any apologies, madam. I only find myself unable to repay the obligation. And yet I have been trying my interest of late to serve you. Having learnt, madam, that you had some demands upon Government, I have, though unasked, been your solicitor there.



Lofty. Why, madam—but let it go no further—it was I procured him his place.
Sir William. Did you, sir?
Lofty. Either you or I sir.

Act III. Scene I.

Miss Rich. Sir, I am infinitely obliged to your intentions; but my guardian has employed another gentleman, who assures him of success.

Sir Will. Who? the important little man that visits here? Trust me, madam, he's quite contemptible among men in power, and utterly unable to serve you. Mr. Lofty's promises are much better known to people of fashion than his person, I assure you.

Miss Rich. How have we been deceived! As sure as can be, here he comes.

Sir Will. Does he? Remember, I'm to continue unknown. My return to England has not as yet been made public. With what impudence he enters!

Enter LOFTY

Lofty. Let the chariot—let my chariot drive off; I'll visit to his Grace's in a chair. Miss Richland here before me! Punctual, as usual, to the calls of humanity. I'm very sorry, madam, things of this kind should happen, especially to a man I have shown everywhere, and carried amongst us as a particular acquaintance.

Miss Rich. I find, sir, you have the art of making the misfortunes of others your own.

Lofty. My dear madam, what can a private man like me do? One man can't do everything; and then I do so much in this way every day. Let me see, something considerable might be done for him by subscription; it could not fail if I carried the list. I'll undertake to set down a brace of dukes, two dozen lords, and half the Lower House, at my own peril.

Sir Will. And after all, it is more than probable, sir, he might reject the offer of such powerful patronage.

Lofty. Then, madam, what can we do? You know I never make promises. In truth, I once or twice tried to do something with him in the way of business; but, as I often told his uncle, Sir William Honeywood, the man was utterly impracticable.

Sir Will. His uncle! Then that gentleman, I suppose, is a particular friend of yours?

Lofty. Meaning me, sir? Yes, madam, as I often said, My dear Sir William, you are sensible I would do anything, as far as my poor interest goes, to serve your family; but what can be done? There's no procuring first-rate places for ninth-rate abilities.

Miss Rich. I have heard of Sir William Honeywood; he's abroad in employment. He confided in your judgment, I suppose?

Lofty. Why, yes, madam; I believe Sir William had some reason to confide in my judgment: one little reason, perhaps.

Miss Rich. Pray, sir, what was it?

Lofty. Why, madam—but let it go no further—it was I procured him his place.

Sir Will. Did you, sir?

Lofty. Either you or I, sir.

Miss Rich. This, Mr. Lofty, was very kind, indeed.

Lofty. I did love him, to be sure; he had some amusing qualities: no man was fitter to be toast-master to a club, or had a better head.

Miss Rich. A better head?

Lofty. Ay, at a bottle. To be sure, he was as dull as a choice spirit; but, hang it, he was grateful, very grateful; and gratitude hides a multitude of faults.

Sir Will. He might have reason, perhaps. His place is pretty considerable, I'm told.

Lofty. A trifle, a mere trifle among us men of business. The truth is, he wanted dignity to fill up a greater.

Sir Will. Dignity of person, do you mean, sir? I'm told he's much about my size and figure, sir.

Lofty. Ay, tall enough for a marching regiment; but then he wanted a something—a consequence of form—a kind of a—I believe the lady perceives my meaning.

Miss Rich. Oh, perfectly; you courtiers can do anything, I see.

Lofty. My dear madam, all this is but a mere exchange; we do greater things for one another every day. Why, as thus, now: let me suppose you the First Lord of the Treasury. You have an employment in you that I want; I have a place in me that you want; do me here, do you there: interest of both sides, few words, flat, done and done, and it's over.

Sir Will. A thought strikes me. (*Aside.*) Now you mention Sir William Honeywood, madam, and as he seems, sir, an acquaintance of yours, you'll be glad to hear he's arrived from Italy. I had it from a friend who knows him as well as he does me, and you may depend on my information.

Lofty. If I had known that, we should not have been quite so well acquainted. (*Aside.*)

Sir Will. He is certainly returned; and as this gentleman is a friend of yours, he can be of signal service to us, by introducing me to him. There are some papers relative to your affairs that require dispatch and his inspection.

Miss Rich. This gentleman, Mr. Lofty, is a person employed in my affairs. I know you'll serve us.

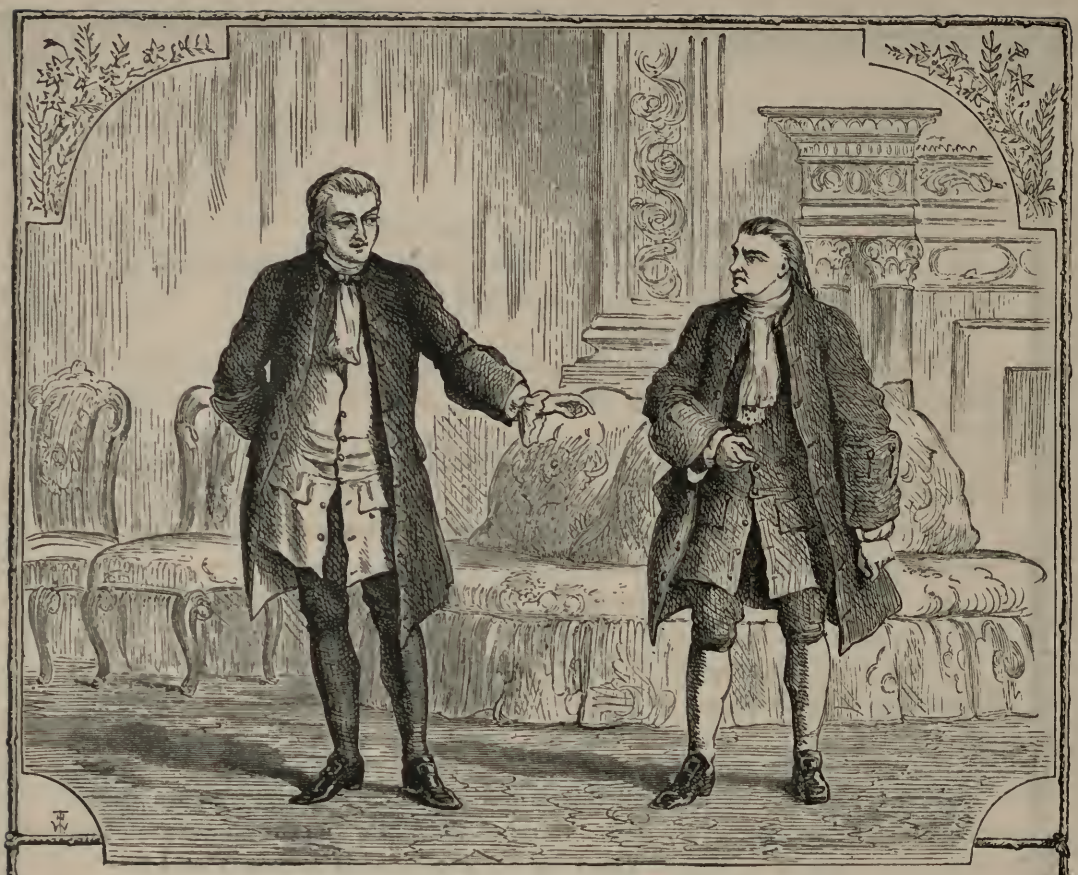
Lofty. My dear madam, I live but to serve you. Sir William shall even wait upon him, if you think proper to command it.

Sir Will. That would be quite unnecessary.

Lofty. Well, we must introduce you, then. Call upon me—let me see—ay, in two days.

Sir Will. Now, or the opportunity will be lost for ever.

Lofty. Well, if it must be now, now let it be. But ——, that's unfortunate; my Lord Grig's —— Pensacola business comes on this very hour, and I'm engaged to attend. Another time——



Sir William. To the land of matrimony! A pleasant journey, Jarvis.
Jarvis. Ay, but I'm only to have all the fatigues on't. *Act III. Scene I.*

Sir Will. A short letter to Sir William will do.

Lofty. You shall have it. Yet, in my opinion, a letter is a very bad way of going to work: face to face, that's my way.

Sir Will. The letter, sir, will do quite as well.

Lofty. Zounds, sir, do you pretend to direct me? direct me in the business of office? Do you know me, sir? who I am?

Miss Rich. Dear Mr. Lofty, this request is not so much his as mine. If my commands——But you despise my power.

Lofty. Delicate creature! your commands could even control a debate at midnight; to a power so constitutional I am all obedience and tranquillity. He shall have a letter. Where is my secretary? Dubardieu! And yet, I protest, I don't like this way of doing business. I think if I spoke first to Sir William ——But you will have it so. (*Exit with* MISS RICH.)

SIR WILLIAM, *alone.*

Sir Will. Ha! ha! ha! This, too, is one of my nephew's hopeful associates. O vanity, thou constant deceiver, how do all thy efforts to exalt serve but to sink us! thy false colourings, like those employed to heighten beauty, only seem to mend that bloom which they contribute to destroy. I'm not displeased at this interview: exposing this fellow's impudence to the contempt it deserves

may be of use to my design; at least, if he can reflect, it will be of use to himself.

Enter JARVIS.

Sir Will. How now, Jarvis; where's your master, my nephew?

Jarvis. At his wits' end, I believe. He's scarce gotten out of one scrape but he's running his head into another.

Sir Will. How so?

Jarvis. The house has but just been cleared of the bailiffs, and now he's again engaging tooth and nail in assisting old Croaker's son to patch up a clandestine match with the young lady that passes in the house for his sister.

Sir Will. Ever busy to serve others.

Jarvis. Ay, anybody but himself. The young couple, it seems, are just setting out for Scotland, and he supplies them with money for the journey.

Sir Will. Money! How is he able to supply others, who has scarce any for himself?

Jarvis. Why, there it is; he has no money, that's true; but then, as he never said *No* to any request in his life, he has given them a bill drawn by a friend of his upon a merchant in the City, which I am to get changed; for you must know that I am to go with them to Scotland myself.

Sir Will. How!

Jarvis. It seems the young gentleman is obliged to take a different road from his mistress, as he is to call upon an uncle of his that lives out of the way, in order to prepare a place for their reception when they return; so they have borrowed me from my master, as the properest person to attend the young lady down.

Sir Will. To the land of matrimony! A pleasant journey, Jarvis.

Jarvis. Ay, but I'm only to have all the fatigues on't.

Sir Will. Well, it may be shorter and less fatiguing than you imagine. I know but too much of the young lady's family and connections, whom I have seen abroad. I have also discovered that Miss Richland is not indifferent to my thoughtless nephew; and will endeavour—though, I fear, in vain—to establish that connection. But come; the letter I wait for must be almost finished; I'll let you further into my intentions in the next room. (*Exeunt.*)

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—CROAKER'S *House.*

Lofty. Well, sure the —— is in me of late, for running my head into such defiles, as nothing but a genius like my own could draw me from. I was formerly contented to husband out my places and pensions with some degree of frugality; but of late I have given away the whole Court Register in less time than they could print the title-page; yet, hang it, why scruple a lie or two to come at a fine girl, when I every day tell a thousand for nothing! Ha! Honeywood here before me. Could Miss Richland have set him at liberty?

Enter HONEYWOOD.

Mr. Honeywood, I'm glad to see you abroad again. I find my concurrence was not necessary in your unfortunate affairs. I had put things in a train to do your business; but it is not for me to say what I intended doing.

Honeywood. It was unfortunate indeed, sir. But what adds to my uneasiness is, that while you seem to be acquainted with my misfortune, I myself continue still a stranger to my benefactor.

Lofty. How! not know the friend that served you?

Honeywood. Can't guess at the person.

Lofty. Inquire.

Honeywood. I have; but all I can learn is, that he chooses to remain concealed, and that all inquiry must be fruitless.

Lofty. Must be fruitless?

Honeywood. Absolutely fruitless.

Lofty. Sure of that?

Honeywood. Very sure.

Lofty. Then you shall never know it from me.

Honeywood. How, sir?

Lofty. I suppose now, Mr. Honeywood, you think my rent-roll very considerable, and that I have vast sums of money to throw away; I know you do. The world, to be sure, says such things of me.

Honeywood. The world, by what I learn, is no stranger to your generosity. But where does this tend?

Lofty. To nothing—nothing in the world. The town, to be sure, when it makes such a thing as me the subject of conversation, has asserted that I never yet patronised a man of merit.

Honeywood. I have heard instances to the contrary, even from yourself.

Lofty. Yes, Honeywood, and there are instances to the contrary that you shall never hear from myself.

Honeywood. Ha! Dear sir, permit me to ask you but one question.

Lofty. Sir, ask me no questions: I say, sir, ask me no questions; I'll not answer them.

Honeywood. I will ask no further. My friend, my benefactor, it is, it must be here, that I am indebted for freedom—for honour. Yes, thou worthiest of men, from the beginning I suspected it, but was afraid to return thanks; which, if undeserved, might seem reproaches.

Lofty. I protest I don't understand all this, Mr. Honeywood. You treat me very cavalierly, I do assure you, sir. Blood, sir! can't a man be permitted to enjoy the luxury of his own feelings without all this parade?

Honeywood. Nay, do not attempt to conceal an action that adds to your honour. Your looks, your air, your manner, all confess it.

Lofty. Confess it, sir? Torture itself, sir, shall never bring me to confess it. Mr. Honeywood, I have admitted you upon terms of friendship. Don't let us fall out; make me happy, and let this be buried in oblivion. You know I hate ostentation; you know I do. Come, come, Honeywood, you know I always loved to be a friend, and not a patron. I beg this may make no kind of distance between us. Come, come; you and I must be more familiar—indeed we must.

Honeywood. Heavens! Can I ever repay such friendship? Is there any way? Thou best of men, can I ever return the obligation?

Lofty. A bagatelle—a mere bagatelle. But I see your heart is labouring to be grateful. You shall be grateful. It would be cruel to disappoint you.

Honeywood. How? Teach me the manner. Is there any way?

Lofty. From this moment you're mine. Yes, my friend, you shall know it—I'm in love.

Honeywood. And can I assist you?

Lofty. Nobody so well.

Honeywood. In what manner? I'm all impatience.

Lofty. You shall make love for me.

Honeywood. And to whom shall I speak in your favour?

Lofty. To a lady with whom you have great interest, I assure you—Miss Richland.

Honeywood. Miss Richland!

Lofty. Yes, Miss Richland. She has struck the blow up to the hilt in my bosom, by Jupiter.

Honeywood. Was ever anything more unfortunate? It is too much to be endured.

Lofty. Unfortunate indeed! and yet I can endure it, till you have opened the affair to her for me. Between ourselves, I think she likes me: I'm not apt to boast, but I think she does.

Honeywood. Indeed! But do you know the person you apply to?

Lofty. Yes, I know you are her friend, and mine: that's enough. To you, therefore, I commit the success of my passion. I'll say no more, let friendship do the rest. I have only to add, that if at any time my little interest can be of

service——But hang it, I'll make no promises: you know my interest is yours at any time. No apologies, my friend—I'll not be answered; it shall be so. (*Exit.*)

Honeywood. Open, generous, unsuspecting man! He little thinks that I love her too; and with such an ardent passion! But then it was ever but a vain and hopeless one—my torment, my persecution! What shall I do? Love, friendship, a hopeless passion, a deserving friend! Love, that has been my tormentor; a friend, that has, perhaps, distressed himself to serve me. It shall be so. Yes, I will discard the fondling hope from my bosom, and exert all my influence in his favour. And yet, to see her in the possession of another! —insupportable! But then, to betray a generous, trusting friend!—worse, worse! Yes, I'm resolved. Let me but be the instrument of their happiness, and then quit a country where I must for ever despair of finding my own. (*Exit.*)

Enter OLIVIA *and* GARNET, *who carries a milliner's box.*

Olivia. Dear me! I wish this journey were over. No news of Jarvis yet? I believe the old peevish creature delays purely to vex me.

Garnet. Why, to be sure, madam, I did hear him say, a little snubbing before marriage would teach you to bear it the better afterwards.

Olivia. To be gone a full hour, though he had only to get a bill changed in the city! How provoking!

Garnet. I'll lay my life Mr. Leontine, that had twice as much to do, is setting off by this time from his inn, and here you are left behind.

Olivia. Well, let us be prepared for his coming, however. Are you sure you have omitted nothing, Garnet?

Garnet. Not a stick, madam—all's here. Yet I wish you could take the white and silver to be married in. It's the worst luck in the world, in anything but white. I knew one Bett Stubbs, of our town, that was married in red, and, as sure as eggs is eggs, the bridegroom and she had a miff before morning.

Olivia. No matter. I'm all impatience till we are out of the house.

Garnet. Bless me, madam! I had almost forgot the wedding-ring!—the sweet little thing!—I don't think it would go on my little finger. And what if I put in a gentleman's night-cap, in case of necessity, madam? But here's Jarvis.

Enter JARVIS.

Olivia. O Jarvis, are you come at last? We have been ready this half hour. Now let's be going—let us fly!

Jarvis. Ay, to Jericho; for we shall have no going to Scotland this bout, I fancy.

Olivia. How! What's the matter?

Jarvis. Money—money is the matter, madam! We have got no money! What do you send me on your fool's errand for? My master's bill upon

Olivia. How! What's the matter?

Jarvis. Money—money is the matter, madam. We have got no money. What do you send me on your fool's errand for?

Act IV. Scene I.

the City is not worth a rush. Here it is; Mrs. Garnet may pin up her hair with it.

Olivia. Undone! How could Honeywood serve us so! What shall we do? Can't we go without it?

Jarvis. Go to Scotland without money! To Scotland without money! ——, how some people understand geography! We might as well set sail for Patagonia upon a cork jacket.

Olivia. Such a disappointment! What a base, insincere man was your master, to serve us in this manner! Is this his good-nature?

Jarvis. Nay, don't talk ill of my master, madam. I won't bear to hear anybody talk ill of him but myself.

Garnet. Bless us! now I think on't, madam, you need not be under any uneasiness: I saw Mr. Leontine receive forty guineas from his father just before he set out, and he can't yet have left the inn. A short letter will reach him there.

Olivia. Well remembered, Garnet; I'll write immediately. How's this? Bless me, my hand trembles so I can't write a word. Do you write, Garnet; and, upon second thought, it will be safer from you.

Garnet. Truly, madam, I write and indite but poorly; I never was cute at my larning. But I'll do what I can to please you. Let me see. All out of my own head, I suppose?

Olivia. Whatever you please.

Garnet. (*Writing.*) "Muster Croaker." Twenty guineas, madam?

Olivia. Ay, twenty will do.

Garnet. "At the bar of the Talbot till called for. Expedition—will be blown up—All of a flame—Quick, despatch—Cupid, the little God of Love." I conclude it, madam, with "Cupid:" I love to see a love-letter end like poetry.

Olivia. Well, well; what you please—anything. But how shall we send it? I can trust none of the servants of this family.

Garnet. Odso, madam, Mr. Honeywood's butler is in the next room. He's a dear, sweet man; he'll do anything for me.

Jarvis. He! the dog; he'll certainly commit some blunder. He's drunk and sober ten times a day.

Olivia. No matter. Fly, Garnet; anybody we can trust will do. (*Exit* GARNET.) Well, Jarvis, now we can have nothing more to interrupt us. You may take up the things, and carry them on to the inn. Have you no hands, Jarvis?

Jarvis. Soft and fair, young lady. You, that are going to be married, think things can never be done too fast; but we that are old, and know what we are about, must elope methodically, madam.

Olivia. Well, sure, if my indiscretions were to be done over again——

Jarvis. My life for it, you would do them ten times over.

Olivia. Why will you talk so? If you knew how unhappy they make me——

Jarvis. Very unhappy, no doubt; I was once just as unhappy when I was going to be married myself. I'll tell you a story about that——

Olivia. A story! when I'm all impatience to be away. Was there ever such a dilatory creature?

Jarvis. Well, madam! if we must march, why we will march; that's all. Though, odds-bobs, we have still forgot one thing we should never travel without—a case of good razors, and a box of shaving-powder. But no matter, I believe we shall be pretty well shaved by the way. (*Going.*)

Enter GARNET.

Garnet. Undone, undone, madam! Ah, Mr. Jarvis, you said right enough. As sure as death, Mr. Honeywood's rogue of a drunken butler dropped the letter before he went ten yards from the door. There's old Croaker has just picked it up, and is this moment reading it to himself in the hall.

Olivia. Unfortunate! we shall be discovered.

Garnet. No, madam, don't be uneasy, he can make neither head nor tail of it. To be sure, he looks as if he was broke loose from Bedlam about it, but he can't find what it means for all that. Oh ——, he is coming this way all in the horrors!

Olivia. Then let us leave the house this instant, for fear he should ask further questions. In the meantime, Garnet, do you write and send off just such another. (*Exeunt.*)

Enter CROAKER.

Croaker. Death and destruction! Are all the horrors of air, fire, and water, to be levelled only at me? Am I only to be singled out for gunpowder-plots, combustibles, and conflagration? Here it is—an incendiary letter dropped at my door. "To Muster Croaker, these, with speed." Ay, ay, plain enough the direction; all in the genuine incendiary spelling, and as cramp as ——. "With speed!" Oh, confound your speed! But let me read it once more. (*Reads.*) "Muster Croakar as sone as yoew see this leve twenty gunnes at the bar of the Talboot tell caled for or yowe and yower experetion will be al blown up." Ah, but too plain. Blood and gunpowder in every line of it. Blown up! murderous dog! All blown up! ——! what have I and my poor family done, to be all blown up! (*Reads.*) "Our pockets are low, and money we must have." Ay, there's the reason; they'll blow us up, because they have got low pockets. (*Reads.*) "It is but a short time you have to consider; for if this takes wind, the house will quickly be all of a flame." Inhuman monsters! blow us up, and then burn us. The earthquake at Lisbon was but a bonfire to it. (*Reads.*) "Make quick dispatch, and so no more at present. But may Cupid, the little God of Love, go with you wherever you go." The little God of Love! Cupid, the little God of Love, go with me! Go you —— you and your little Cupid together! I'm so frightened, I scarce know whether I sit, stand, or

Honeywood. I presumed to solicit this interview, madam, before I left town, to be permitted——
Miss Richland. Indeed! Leaving town, sir? *Act IV. Scene I.*

go. Perhaps this moment I'm treading on lighted matches, blazing brimstone, and barrels of gunpowder. They are preparing to blow me up into the clouds. Murder! We shall be all burnt in our beds; we shall be all burnt in our beds!

Enter MISS RICHLAND.

Miss Rich. Sir, what's the matter?

Croaker. Murder's the matter. We shall be all blown up in our beds before morning.

Miss Rich. I hope not, sir.

Croaker. What signifies what you hope, madam, when I have a certificate of it here in my hand? Will nothing alarm my family? Sleeping and eating, sleeping and eating, is the only work from morning till night in my house. My insensible crew could sleep, though rocked by an earthquake; and fry beefsteaks at a volcano.

Miss Rich. But, sir, you have alarmed them so often already; we have nothing but earthquakes, famines, plagues, and mad dogs, from year's end to year's end. You remember, sir, it is not above a month ago you assured us of a conspiracy among the bakers, to poison us in our bread; and so kept the whole family a week upon potatoes.

Croaker. And potatoes were too good for them. But why do I stand talking here with a girl, when I should be facing the enemy without? Here—John, Nicodemus, search the house! Look into the cellars, to see if there be any combustibles below; and above, in the apartments, that no matches be thrown in at the windows. Let all the fires be put out, and let the engine be drawn out in the yard, to play upon the house in case of necessity. (*Exit.*)

MISS RICHLAND *alone.*

Miss Rich. What can he mean by all this? Yet, why should I inquire, when he alarms us in this manner almost every day? But Honeywood has desired an interview with me in private. What can he mean? or, rather, what means this palpitation at his approach? It is the first time he ever showed anything in his conduct that seemed particular. Sure he cannot mean to—— But he's here.

Enter HONEYWOOD.

Honeywood. I presumed to solicit this interview, madam, before I left town, to be permitted——

Miss Rich. Indeed! Leaving town, sir?

Honeywood. Yes, madam; perhaps the kingdom. I have presumed, I say, to desire the favour of this interview, in order to disclose something which our long friendship prompts. And yet my fears——

Miss Rich. His fears! what are his fears to mine? (*Aside.*) We have indeed been long acquainted, sir—very long. If I remember, our first meeting was at the French ambassador's. Do you recollect how you were pleased to rally me upon my complexion there?

Honeywood. Perfectly, madam. I presumed to reprove you for painting; but your warmer blushes soon convinced the company that the colouring was all from nature.

Miss Rich. And yet you only meant it, in your good-natured way, to make me pay a compliment to myself. In the same manner you danced that night with the most awkward woman in company, because you saw nobody else would take her out.

Honeywood. Yes; and was rewarded the next night by dancing with the finest woman in company, whom everybody wished to take out.

Miss Rich. Well, sir, if you thought so then, I fear your judgment has since corrected the errors of a first impression. We generally show to most advantage at first. Our sex are like poor tradesmen, that put all their best goods to be seen at the windows.

Honeywood. The first impression, madam, did indeed deceive me. I expected to find a woman with all the faults of conscious flattered beauty. I expected to find her vain and insolent. But every day has since taught me that it is possible to possess sense without pride, and beauty without affectation.

Miss Rich. This, sir, is a style very unusual with Mr. Honeywood; and I

should be glad to know why he thus attempts to increase that vanity, which his own lesson hath taught me to despise.

Honeywood. I ask pardon, madam. Yet, from our long friendship, I presumed I might have some right to offer, without offence, what you may refuse without offending.

Miss Rich. Sir, I beg you'd reflect. Though, I fear, I shall scarce have any power to refuse a request of yours, yet you may be precipitate: consider, sir.

Honeywood. I own my rashness; but, as I plead the cause of friendship, of one who loves—don't be alarmed, madam—who loves you with the most ardent passion; whose whole happiness is placed in you——

Miss Rich. I fear, sir, I shall never find whom you mean, by this description of him.

Honeywood. Ah, madam, it but too plainly points him out; though he should be too humble himself to urge his pretensions, or you too modest to understand them.

Miss Rich. Well; it would be affectation any longer to pretend ignorance; and, I will own, sir, I have long been prejudiced in his favour. It was but natural to wish to make his heart mine, as he seemed himself ignorant of its value.

Honeywood. I see she always loved him. (*Aside.*) I find, madam, you're already sensible of his worth, his passion. How happy is my friend, to be the favourite of one with such sense to distinguish merit, and such beauty to reward it!

Miss Rich. Your friend, sir! What friend?

Honeywood. My best friend—my friend Mr. Lofty, madam.

Miss Rich. He, sir!

Honeywood. Yes, he, madam. He is, indeed, what your warmest wishes might have formed him. And to his other qualities, he adds that of the most passionate regard for you.

Miss Rich. Amazement! No more of this, I beg you, sir.

Honeywood. I see your confusion, madam, and know how to interpret it. And since I so plainly read the language of your heart, shall I make my friend happy by communicating your sentiments?

Miss Rich. By no means.

Honeywood. Excuse me; I must: I know you desire it.

Miss Rich. Mr. Honeywood, let me tell you that you wrong my sentiments and yourself. When I first applied to your friendship, I expected advice and assistance; but now, sir, I see that it is vain to expect happiness from him who has been so bad an economist of his own; and that I must disclaim his friendship who ceases to be a friend to himself. (*Exit.*)

Honeywood. How is this? She has confessed she loved him, and yet she seemed to part in displeasure. Can I have done anything to reproach myself with? No, I believe not; yet, after all, these things should not be done by a

third person: I should have spared her confusion. My friendship carried me a little too far.

Enter CROAKER, *with the letter in his hand, and* MRS. CROAKER.

Mrs. Croaker. Ha! ha! ha! And so, my dear, it's your supreme wish that I should be quite wretched upon this occasion? Ha! ha!

Croaker. (*Mimicking.*) Ha! ha! ha! and so, my dear, it's your supreme pleasure to give me no better consolation?

Mrs. Croaker. Positively, my dear, what is this incendiary stuff and trumpery to me? Our house may travel through the air like the house of Loretto, for aught I care, if I'm to be miserable in it.

Croaker. Would to heaven it were converted into a house of correction for your benefit! Have we not everything to alarm us? Perhaps this very moment the tragedy is beginning.

Mrs. Croaker. Then let us reserve our distress till the rising of the curtain, or give them the money they want, and have done with them.

Croaker. Give them my money! And pray, what right have they to my money?

Mrs. Croaker. And pray, what right, then, have they to my good humour?

Croaker. And so your good humour advises me to part with my money? Why, then, to tell your good humour a piece of my mind, I'd sooner part with my wife. Here's Mr. Honeywood; see what he'll say to it. My dear Honeywood, look at this incendiary letter dropped at my door. It will freeze you with terror; and yet lovey here can read it—can read it, and laugh!

Mrs. Croaker. Yes, and so will Mr. Honeywood.

Croaker. If he does, I'll suffer to be hanged the next minute in the rogue's place, that's all.

Mrs. Croaker. Speak, Mr. Honeywood; is there anything more foolish than my husband's fright upon this occasion?

Honeywood. It would not become me to decide, madam; but, doubtless, the greatness of his terrors now will but invite them to renew their villany another time.

Mrs. Croaker. I told you, he'd be of my opinion.

Croaker. How, sir! do you maintain that I should lie down under such an injury, and show, neither by my tears nor complaints, that I have something of the spirit of a man in me?

Honeywood. Pardon me, sir. You ought to make the loudest complaints, if you desire redress. The surest way to have redress is to be earnest in the pursuit of it.

Croaker. Ay, whose opinion is he of now?

Mrs. Croaker. But don't you think that laughing off our fears is the best way?

Honeywood. What is the best, madam, few can say; but I'll maintain it to be a very wise way.

Croaker. But we're talking of the best. Surely, the best way is to face the enemy in the field, and not wait till he plunders us in our very bedchamber.

Honeywood. Why, sir, as to the best, that—that's a very wise way too.

Mrs. Croaker. But can anything be more absurd than to double our distresses by our apprehensions, and put it in the power of every low fellow, that can scrawl ten words of wretched spelling, to torment us?

Honeywood. Without doubt, nothing more absurd.

Croaker. How! would it not be more absurd to despise the rattle till we are bit by the snake?

Honeywood. Without doubt, perfectly absurd.

Croaker. Then you are of my opinion?

Honeywood. Entirely.

Mrs. Croaker. And you reject mine?

Honeywood. —— forbid, madam. No, sure no reasoning can be more just than yours. We ought certainly to despise malice, if we cannot oppose it, and not make the incendiary's pen as fatal to our repose as the highwayman's pistol.

Mrs. Croaker. Oh! then you think I'm quite right.

Honeywood. Perfectly right.

Croaker. A plague of plagues! we can't both be right. I ought to be sorry, or I ought to be glad. My hat must be on my head, or my hat must be off.

Mrs. Croaker. Certainly, in two opposite opinions, if one be perfectly reasonable, the other can't be perfectly right.

Honeywood. And why may not both be right, madam—Mr. Croaker in earnestly seeking redress, and you in waiting the event with good humour? Pray let me see the letter again. I have it. This letter requires twenty guineas to be left at the bar of the Talbot Inn. If it be indeed an incendiary letter, what if you and I, sir, go there; and, when the writer comes to be paid his expected booty, seize him?

Croaker. My dear friend, it's the very thing—the very thing. While I walk by the door, you shall plant yourself in ambush near the bar, burst out upon the miscreant like a masqued battery, extort a confession at once, and so hang him up by surprise.

Honeywood. Yes; but I would not choose to exercise too much severity. It is my maxim, sir, that crimes generally punish themselves.

Croaker. Well, but we may upbraid him a little, I suppose? (*Ironically.*)

Honeywood. Ay, but not punish him too rigidly.

Croaker. Well, well, leave that to my own benevolence.

Honeywood. Well, I do; but remember that universal benevolence is the first law of nature. (*Exeunt* HONEYWOOD *and* MRS. CROAKER.)

Croaker. Yes; and my universal benevolence will hang the dog, if he had as many necks as a hydra.

Croaker. (*Discovering himself.*) How does he look now—how does he look now?
Olivia. Ah!
Leont. Undone!

Act V. Scene I.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*An Inn.*

Enter OLIVIA, JARVIS.

Olivia. Well, we have got safe to the inn, however. Now, if the post-chaise were ready——

Jarvis. The horses are just finishing their oats; and, as they are not going to be married, they choose to take their own time.

Olivia. You are for ever giving wrong motives to my impatience.

Jarvis. Be as impatient as you will, the horses must take their own time. Besides, you don't consider we have got no answer from our fellow-traveller yet. If we hear nothing from Mr. Leontine, we have only one way left us.

Olivia. What way?

Jarvis. The way home again.

Olivia. Not so. I have made a resolution to go, and nothing shall induce me to break it.

Jarvis. Ay; resolutions are well kept when they jump with inclination. However, I'll go to hasten things without. And I'll call, too, at the bar to see if anything should be left for us there. Don't be in such a plaguy hurry, madam, and we shall go the faster, I promise you. (*Exit* JARVIS.)

Enter LANDLADY.

Landlady. What! Solomon. Why don't you move? Pipes and tobacco for the Lamb there. Will nobody answer? To the Dolphin—quick! The Angel has been outrageous this half hour. Did your ladyship call, madam?

Olivia. No, madam.

Landlady. I find as you're for Scotland, madam—but that's no business of mine; married, or not married, I ask no questions. To be sure, we had a sweet little couple set off from this two days ago, for the same place. The gentleman, for a tailor, was, to be sure, as fine a spoken tailor as ever blew froth from a full pot. And the young lady so bashful, it was near half an hour before we could get her to finish a pint of raspberry between us.

Olivia. But this gentleman and I are not going to be married, I assure you.

Landlady. Maybe not. That's no business of mine; for certain, Scotch marriages seldom turn out well. There was, of my own knowledge, Miss Macfag, that married her father's footman. Alack-a-day! she and her husband soon parted, and now keep separate cellars in Hedge Lane.

Olivia. A very pretty picture of what lies before me! (*Aside.*)

Enter LEONTINE.

Leont. My dear Olivia, my anxiety till you were out of danger was too great to be resisted. I could not help coming to see you set out, though it exposes us to a discovery.

Olivia. May everything you do prove as fortunate. Indeed, Leontine, we have been most cruelly disappointed. Mr. Honeywood's bill upon the City has, it seems, been protested, and we have been utterly at a loss how to proceed.

Leont. How! An offer of his own, too. Sure, he could not mean to deceive us.

Olivia. Depend upon his sincerity; he only mistook the desire for the power of serving us. But let us think no more of it. I believe the post-chaise is ready by this.

Landlady. Not quite yet; and, begging your ladyship's pardon, I don't think your ladyship quite ready for the post-chaise. The north road is a cold place, madam. I have a drop in the house of as pretty raspberry as ever was tipt over tongue. Just a thimbleful, to keep the wind off your stomach. To be sure, the last couple we had here, they said it was a perfect nosegay. Ecod, I sent them both away as good-natured! Up went the blinds, round went the wheels, and, Drive away, post-boy! was the word.

Enter CROAKER.

Croaker. Well, while my friend Honeywood is upon the post of danger at the bar, it must be my business to have an eye about me here. I think I know an incendiary's look; for, wherever the devil makes a purchase, he never fails to set his mark! Ha! who have we here? My son and daughter! What can they be doing here?

Landlady. I tell you, madam, it will do you good. I think I know, by this time, what's good for the north road. It's a raw, night, madam. Sir——

Leont. Not a drop more, good madam. I should now take it as a greater favour if you hasten the horses; for I am afraid to be seen myself.

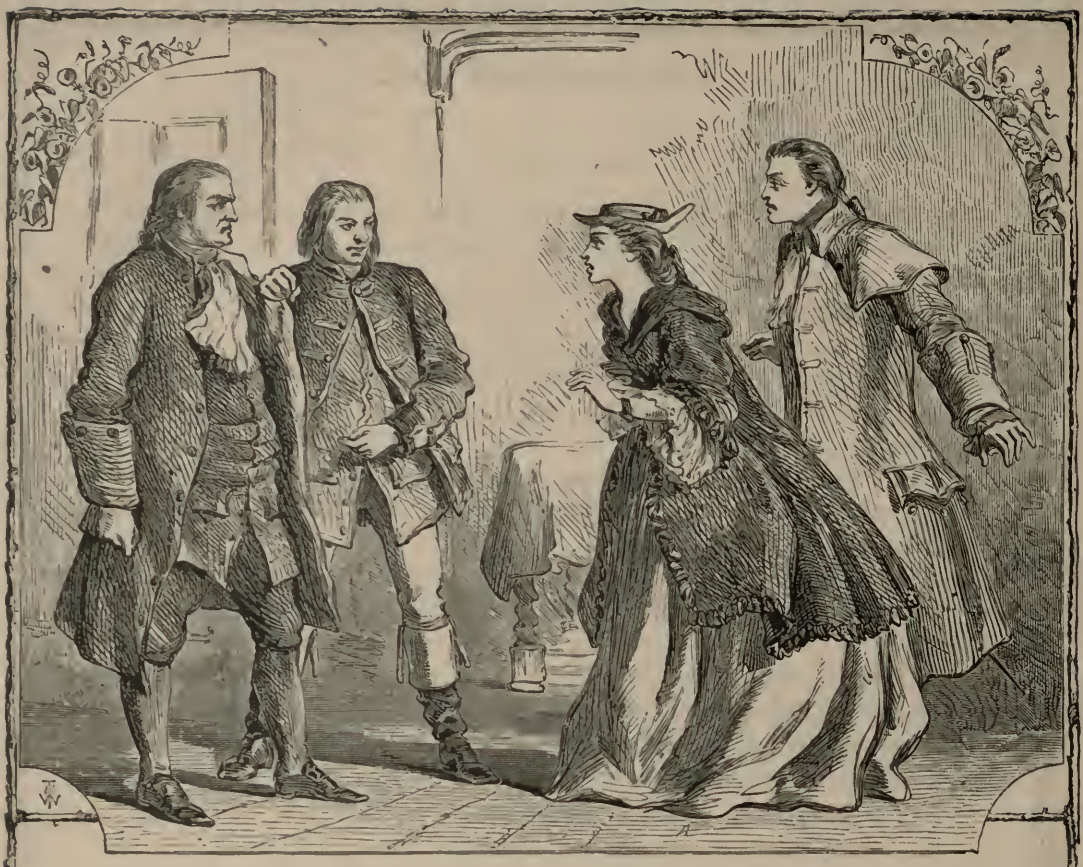
Landlady. That shall be done. Wha, Solomon! Are you all dead, there? Wha, Solomon, I say. (*Exit, bawling.*)

Olivia. Well, I dread lest an expedition, begun in fear, should end in repentance. Every moment we stay increases our danger, and adds to my apprehensions.

Leont. There's no danger, trust me, my dear—there can be none. If Honeywood has acted with honour, and kept my father, as he promised, in employment till we are out of danger, nothing can interrupt our journey.

Olivia. I have no doubt of Mr. Honeywood's sincerity, and even his desires to serve us. My fears are from your father's suspicions. A mind so disposed to be alarmed without a cause will be but too ready when there's a reason.

Leont. Why, let him, when we are out of his power. But believe me,



Postboy. Ay, master, we have him fast enough. Here is the incendiary dog. I'm entitled to the reward; I'll take my oath I saw him ask for the money at the bar, and then run for it. *Act V. Scene I.*

Olivia, you have no great reason to dread his resentment. His repining temper, as it does no manner of injury to himself, so will it never do harm to others. He only frets to keep himself employed, and scolds for his private amusement.

Olivia. I don't know that; but I'm sure, on some occasions, it makes him look most shockingly.

Croaker. (*Discovering himself.*) How does he look now—how does he look now?

Olivia. Ah!

Leont. Undone!

Croaker. How do I look now? Sir, I am your very humble servant. Madam, I am yours. What! you are going off, are you? Then, first, if you please, take a word or two from me with you before you go. Tell me first where you are going; and when you have told me that, perhaps I shall know as little as I did before.

Leont. If that be so, our answer might but increase your displeasure, without adding to your information.

Croaker. I want no information from you, puppy! And you too, madam: what answer have you got? (*A cry without, Stop him!*) Eh! I think I heard a noise. My friend Honeywood without—has he seized the incendiary? Ah, no, for now I hear no more on't.

Leont. Honeywood without? Then, sir, it was Mr. Honeywood that directed you hither?

Croaker. No, sir, it was Mr. Honeywood conducted me hither.

Leont. Is it possible?

Croaker. Possible! Why, he's in the house now, sir. More anxious about me than my own son, sir.

Leont. Then, sir, he's a villain.

Croaker. How, sirrah! a villain, because he takes most care of your father? I'll not bear it. I tell you, I'll not bear it. Honeywood is a friend to the family, and I'll have him treated as such.

Leont. I shall study to repay his friendship as it deserves.

Croaker. Ah, rogue, if you knew how earnestly he entered into my griefs, and pointed out the means to detect them, you would love him as I do. (*A cry without. Stop him!*) Fire and fury! they have seized the incendiary: they have the villain, the incendiary in view. Stop him, stop an incendiary, a murderer! Stop him! (*Exit.*)

Olivia. Oh, my terrors! What can this new tumult mean?

Leont. Some new mark, I suppose, of Mr. Honeywood's sincerity. But we shall have satisfaction: he shall give me instant satisfaction.

Olivia. It must not be, my Leontine, if you value my esteem or my happiness. Whatever be our fate, let us not add guilt to our misfortunes. Consider that our innocence will shortly be all we have left us. You must forgive him.

Leont. Forgive him! Has he not in every instance betrayed us? Forced me to borrow money from him, which appears a mere trick to delay us: promised to keep my father engaged till we were out of danger, and here brought him to the very scene of our escape?

Olivia. Don't be precipitate. We may yet be mistaken.

Enter POSTBOY, *dragging in* JARVIS; HONEYWOOD *entering soon after.*

Postboy. Ay, master, we have him fast enough. Here is the incendiary dog. I'm entitled to the reward; I'll take my oath I saw him ask for the money at the bar, and then run for it.

Honeywood. Come, bring him along. Let us see him. Let him learn to blush for his crimes. (*Discovering his mistake.*) Death! what's here?—Jarvis, Leontine, Olivia! What can all this mean?

Jarvis. Why, I'll tell you what it means; that I was an old fool, and that you are my master—that's all.

Honeywood. Confusion!

Leont. Yes, sir; I find you have kept your word with me. After such baseness, I wonder how you can venture to see the man you have injured.

Honeywood. My dear Leontine, by my life, my honour——

Leont. Peace, peace, for shame; and do not continue to aggravate baseness by hypocrisy. I know you, sir, I know you.

Honeywood. Why, won't you hear me? By all that's just, I knew not——

Leont. Hear you, sir, to what purpose? I now see through all your low arts; your ever complying with every opinion; your never refusing any request; all these, sir, have long been contemptible to the world, and are now perfectly so to me.

Honeywood. Ha! contemptible to the world! That reaches me. (*Aside.*)

Leont. All the seeming sincerity of your professions, I now find, were only allurements to betray; and all your seeming regret for their consequences only calculated to cover the cowardice of your heart. Draw, villain!

Enter CROAKER, *out of breath.*

Croaker. Where is the villain? Where is the incendiary? (*Seizing the* POSTBOY.) Hold him fast, the dog; he has the gallows in his face. Come, you dog, confess—confess all, and hang yourself.

Postboy. Zounds, master! what do you throttle me for?

Croaker. (*Beating him.*) Dog, do you resist? do you resist?

Postboy. Zounds, master! I'm not he; there's the man that we thought was the rogue, and turns out to be one of the company.

Croaker. How!

Honeywood. Mr. Croaker, we have all been under a strange mistake here: I find there is nobody guilty; it was all an error—entirely an error of our own.

Croaker. And I say, sir, that you're in an error; for there's guilt, and double guilt; a plot, a ——— jesuitical, pestilential plot; and I must have proof of it.

Honeywood. Do but hear me.

Croaker. What! you intend to bring 'em off, I suppose? I'll hear nothing.

Honeywood. Madam, you seem at least calm enough to hear reason.

Olivia. Excuse me.

Honeywood. Good Jarvis, let me then explain it to you.

Jarvis. What signifies explanation when the thing is done?

Honeywood. Will nobody hear me? Was there ever such a set, so blinded by passion and prejudice! (*To the* POSTBOY.) My good friend, I believe you'll be surprised when I assure you——

Postboy. Sure me nothing—I'm sure of nothing but a good beating.

Croaker. Come, then, you, madam; if you ever hope for any favour or forgiveness, tell me sincerely all you know of this affair.

Olivia. Unhappily, sir, I'm but too much the cause of your suspicions. You see before you, sir, one that with false pretences has stept into your family, to betray it: not your daughter——

Croaker. Not my daughter!

Olivia. Not your daughter—but a mean deceiver—who—support me, I cannot——

Honeywood. Help! she's going! give her air.

Croaker. Ay, ay, take the young woman to the air; I would not hurt

a hair of her head, whose ever daughter she may be—not so bad as that neither.

(*Exeunt all but* CROAKER.)

Croaker. Yes, yes, all's out; I now see the whole affair. My son is either married, or going to be so, to this lady, whom he imposed upon me as his sister. Ay, certainly so; and yet I don't find it afflicts me so much as one might think. There's the advantage of fretting away our misfortunes beforehand, we never feel them when they come.

Enter MISS RICHLAND *and* SIR WILLIAM.

Sir Will. But how do you know, madam, that my nephew intends setting off from this place?

Miss Rich. My maid assured me he was come to this inn, and my own knowledge of his intending to leave the kingdom suggested the rest. But what do I see? my guardian here before us! Who, my dear sir, could have expected meeting you here? To what accident do we owe this pleasure?

Croaker. To a fool, I believe.

Miss Rich. But to what purpose did you come?

Croaker. To play the fool.

Miss Rich. But with whom?

Croaker. With greater fools than myself.

Miss Rich. Explain.

Croaker. Why, Mr. Honeywood brought me here, to do nothing now I am here; and my son is going to be married to I don't know who that is here; so now you are as wise as I am.

Miss Rich. Married! to whom, sir?

Croaker. To Olivia—my daughter, as I took her to be: but who she is, or whose daughter she is, I know no more than the man in the moon.

Sir Will. Then, sir, I can inform you; and though a stranger, yet you shall find me a friend to your family. It will be enough, at present, to assure you that, both in point of birth and fortune, the young lady is at least your son's equal. Being left by her father, Sir James Woodville——

Croaker. Sir James Woodville! What, of the west!

Sir Will. Being left by him, I say, to the care of a mercenary wretch, whose only aim was to secure her fortune to himself, she was sent into France, under pretence of education; and there every art was tried to fix her for life in a convent, contrary to her inclinations. Of this I was informed upon my arrival at Paris; and as I had been once her father's friend, I did all in my power to frustrate her guardian's base intentions. I had even meditated to rescue her from his authority, when your son stept in with more pleasing violence, gave her liberty, and you a daughter.

Croaker. But I intend to have a daughter of my own choosing, sir. A young lady, sir, whose fortune, by my interest, with those that have interest, will be double what my son has a right to expect. Do you know Mr. Lofty, sir?

Sir Will. Yes, sir; and know that you are deceived in him. But step this way, and I will convince you. (CROAKER *and* SIR WILLIAM *seem to confer.*)

Enter HONEYWOOD.

Honeywood. Obstinate man, still to persist in his outrage! Insulted by him, despised by all, I now begin to grow contemptible even to myself. How have I sunk, by too great an assiduity to please! How have I overtaxed all my abilities, lest the approbation of a single fool should escape me! But all is now over. I have survived my reputation, my fortune, my friendships; and nothing remains henceforward for me but solitude and repentance.

Miss Rich. Is it true, Mr. Honeywood, that you are setting off, without taking leave of your friends? The report is, that you are quitting England. Can it be?

Honeywood. Yes, madam; and though I am so unhappy as to have fallen under your displeasure, yet, thank Heaven, I leave you to happiness: to one who loves you, and deserves your love; to one who has power to procure you affluence, and generosity to improve your enjoyment of it.

Miss Rich. And are you sure, sir, that the gentleman you mean is what you describe him?

Honeywood. I have the best assurances of it—his serving me. He does, indeed, deserve the highest happiness that is in your power to confer. As for me, weak and wavering as I have been, obliged by all, and incapable of serving any, what happiness can I find but in solitude? What hope, but in being forgotten?

Miss Rich. A thousand! to live among friends that esteem you; whose happiness it will be to be permitted to oblige you.

Honeywood. No, madam; my resolution is fixed. Inferiority among strangers is easy; but among those that once were equals, insupportable. Nay, to show you how far my resolution can go, I can now speak with calmness of my former follies, my vanity, my dissipation, my weakness. I will even confess, that, among the number of my other presumptions, I had the insolence to think of loving you. Yes, madam, while I was pleading the passion of another, my heart was tortured with its own. But it is over: it was unworthy our friendship, and let it be forgotten.

Miss Rich. You amaze me!

Honeywood. But you'll forgive it, I know you will; since the confession should not have come from me even now, but to convince you of the sincerity of my intention of—never mentioning it more. (*Going.*)

Miss Rich. Stay, sir, one moment. Ha! he here—

Enter LOFTY.

Lofty. Is the coast clear? None but friends. I have followed you here with a trifling piece of intelligence: but it goes no further; things are not yet

Sir William. Since, sir, you're so pressing for an answer, I'll tell you who you are—a gentleman as well acquainted with politics as with men in power; as well acquainted with persons of fashion as with modesty; with lords of the treasury as with truth; and with all as you are with Sir William Honeywood. I am Sir William Honeywood.

Act V. Scene I.

ripe for a discovery. I have spirits working at a certain board: your affair at the Treasury will be done in less than—a thousand years. Mum!

Miss Rich. Sooner, sir, I should hope.

Lofty. Why, yes, I believe it may, if it falls into proper hands, that know where to push and where to parry; that know how the land lies—eh, Honeywood?

Miss Rich. It is fallen into yours.

Lofty. Well, to keep you no longer in suspense, your thing is done. It is done, I say—that's all. I have just had assurances from Lord Neverout that the claim has been examined and found admissible. *Quietus* is the word, madam.

Honeywood. But how! his lordship has been at Newmarket these ten days.

Lofty. Indeed! Then Sir Gilbert Goose must have been confoundedly mistaken. I had it of him.

Miss Rich. He! why Sir Gilbert and his family have been in the country this month.

Lofty. This month! It must certainly be so: Sir Gilbert's letter did come to me from Newmarket, so that he must have met his lordship there; and so it came about. I have his letter about me; I'll read it to you. (*Taking out a large bundle.*) That's from Paoli of Corsica; that's from the Marquis of Squilachi. Have you a mind to see a letter from Count Poniatowski, now King of Poland—Honest Pon? (*Searching.*) (*To* SIR WILL.) Oh, sir, what, are you here too? I'll tell you what, honest friend, if you have not absolutely delivered my letter to Sir William Honeywood, you may return it. The thing will do without him.

Sir Will. Sir, I have delivered it, and must inform you it was received with the most mortifying contempt.

Croaker. Contempt! Mr. Lofty, what can that mean?

Lofty. Let him go on—let him go on, I say. You'll find it come to something presently.

Sir Will. Yes, sir, I believe you'll be amazed, if, after waiting some time in the ante-chamber, after being surveyed with insolent curiosity by the passing servants, I was at last assured that Sir William Honeywood knew no such person, and I must certainly have been imposed upon.

Lofty. Good! let me die, very good. Ha! ha! ha!

Croaker. Now, for my life, I can't find out half the goodness of it.

Lofty. You can't. Ha! ha!

Croaker. No, for the soul of me: I think it was as confounded a bad answer as ever was sent from one private gentleman to another.

Lofty. And so you can't find out the force of the message? Why, I was in the house at that very time. Ha! ha! It was I that sent that very answer to my own letter. Ha! ha!

Croaker. Indeed? How! why!

Lofty. In one word, things between Sir William and me must be behind

the curtain. A party has many eyes. He sides with Lord Buzzard; I side with Sir Gilbert Goose. So that unriddles the mystery.

Croaker. And so it does, indeed, and all my suspicions are over.

Lofty. Your suspicions? What, then, you have been suspecting, have you? Mr. Croaker, you and I were friends; we are friends no longer. Never talk to me. It's over; I say, it's over.

Croaker. As I hope for your favour, I did not mean to offend. It escaped me. Don't be discomposed.

Lofty. Zounds, sir, but I am discomposed, and will be discomposed. To be treated thus! Who am I? Was it for this I have been dreaded both by ins and outs? Have I been libelled in the Gazetteer, and praised in the St. James's? Have I been chaired at Wildman's, and a speaker at Merchant Tailors' Hall? Have I had my hand to addresses, and my head in the print-shops; and talk to me of suspects?

Croaker. My dear sir, be pacified. What can you have but asking pardon?

Lofty. Sir, I will not be pacified. Suspects! Who am I, to be used thus? Have I paid court to men in favour to serve my friends, the lords of the treasury, Sir William Honeywood, and the rest of the gang, and talk to me of suspects? Who am I, I say? who am I?

Sir Will. Since, sir, you are so pressing for an answer, I'll tell you who you are—a gentleman as well acquainted with politics as with men in power: as well acquainted with persons of fashion as with modesty; with lords of the treasury as with truth; and with all as you are with Sir William Honeywood. I am Sir William Honeywood. (*Discovering his ensigns of the Bath.*)

Croaker. Sir William Honeywood!

Honeywood. Astonishment! my uncle! (*Aside.*)

Lofty. So, then, my confounded genius has been all this time only leading me up to the garret, in order to fling me out of the window.

Croaker. What, Mr. Importance, and are these your works? Suspect you! You, who have been dreaded by the ins and outs; you, who have had your hand to addresses, and your head stuck up in print-shops. If you were served right, you should have your head stuck up in the pillory.

Lofty. Ay, stick it where you will; for it cuts but a very poor figure where it sticks at present.

Sir Will. Well, Mr. Croaker, I hope you now see how incapable this gentleman is of serving you, and how little Miss Richland has to expect from his influence.

Croaker. Ay, sir, too well I see it, and I can't but say I have had some boding of it these ten days. So I'm resolved, since my son has placed his affections on a lady of moderate fortune, to be satisfied with his choice, and not run the hazard of another Mr. Lofty in helping him to a better.

Sir Will. I approve your resolution; and here they come, to receive a confirmation of your pardon and consent.

Croaker. Well, now I see content in every face; but Heaven send we be all better this day three months.
Act V. Scene I.

Enter MRS. CROAKER, JARVIS, LEONTINE, *and* OLIVIA.

Mrs. Croaker. Where's my husband? Come, come, lovey, you must forgive them. Jarvis here has been to tell me the whole affair; and, I say, you must forgive them. Our own was a stolen match, you know, my dear; and we never had any reason to repent of it.

Croaker. I wish we could both say so: however, this gentleman, Sir William Honeywood has been beforehand with you in obtaining their pardon. So, if the two poor fools have a mind to marry, I think we can tack them together without crossing the Tweed for it. (*Joining their hands.*)

Leont. How blest and unexpected! What, what can we say to such goodness? But our future obedience shall be the best reply. And as for this gentleman, to whom we owe——

Sir Will. Excuse me, sir, if I interrupt your thanks, as I have here an interest that calls me. (*Turning to* HONEYWOOD.) Yes, sir, you are surprised to see me; and I own that a desire of correcting your follies led me hither. I saw with indignation the errors of a mind that only sought applause from others; that easiness of disposition which, though inclined to the right, had not courage to condemn the wrong. I saw with regret those splendid errors, that still took name from some neighbouring duty. Your charity, that was but injustice; your benevolence, that was but weakness; and your friendship but credulity. I saw, with regret, great talents and extensive learning only em-

ployed to add sprightliness to error, and increase your perplexities. I saw your mind with a thousand natural charms, but the greatness of its beauty served only to heighten my pity for its prostitution.

Honeywood. Cease to upbraid me, sir: I have for some time but too strongly felt the justice of your reproaches. But there is one way still left me. Yes, sir, I have determined this very hour to quit for ever a place where I have made myself the voluntary slave of all, and to seek among strangers that fortitude which may give strength to the mind, and marshal all its dissipated virtues. Yet, ere I depart, permit me to solicit favour for this gentleman, who, notwithstanding what has happened, has laid me under the most signal obligations. Mr. Lofty——

Lofty. Mr. Honeywood, I am resolved upon a reformation as well as you. I now begin to find that the man who first invented the art of speaking truth was a much cunninger fellow than I thought him. And to prove that I design to speak truth for the future, I must now assure you that you owe your late enlargement to another, as, upon my soul, I had no hand in the matter. So now, if any of the company has a mind for preferment, he may take my place. I'm determined to resign. (*Exit.*)

Honeywood. How have I been deceived!

Sir Will. No, sir, you have been obliged to a kinder, fairer friend for that favour—to Miss Richland. Would she complete our joy, and make the man she has honoured by her friendship happy in her love, I should then forget all, and be as blest as the welfare of my dearest kinsman can make me.

Miss Rich. After what is past, it would be but affectation to pretend to indifference. Yes, I will own an attachment which, I find, was more than friendship. And if my entreaties cannot alter his resolution to quit the country, I will even try if my hand has not power to detain him. (*Giving her hand.*)

Honeywood. How can I have deserved all this? How express my happiness, my gratitude? A moment like this overpays an age of apprehension.

Croaker. Well, now I see content in every face: but Heaven send we be all better this day three months.

Sir Will. Henceforth, nephew, learn to respect yourself. He who seeks only for applause from without, has all his happiness in another's keeping.

Honeywood. Yes, sir, I now too plainly perceive my errors. My vanity, in attempting to please all, by fearing to offend any. My meanness, in approving folly, lest fools should disapprove. Henceforth, therefore, it shall be my study to reserve my pity for real distress, my friendship for true merit, and my love for her who first taught me what it is to be happy.

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